

LAST HOURS

FALL OF EFRAFA ▢ DAISY'S CATERING ▢ SUBHUMANS ▢ SUNDOWNER ▢ ONE NIGHT STAND IN N. DAKOTA ▢ CRANKS ▢ + MORE



RADICAL ILLUSTRATION

NIKKI McCLURE: PAPER CUT IMAGES OF DAILY LIFE...

JOSH MacPHEE: CELEBRATE PEOPLE'S HISTORY & JUST SEEDS VISUAL RESISTANCE

THE ART OF PUNK ROCK: A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF PUNK ILLUSTRATION

BITTERKOMIX: THE REALITY OF SOUTH AFRICA AND APARTHEID THROUGH COMIX

ALSO WITH: PHLEGM COMICS, LAURA OLDFIELD FORD, COUNTERCULTURAL
COMMODIFICATION, STEVE LARDER ILLUSTRATIONS, AND A GUIDE TO FLYPOSTING

ALAN MOORE - ON MAGIC, ALCHEMY, LOST GIRLS & NORTHAMPTON

PRESERVING FOOD ▢ CRITICISM OF CRASS ▢ HEY MONKEY RIOT COMIX ▢ REVIEWS ▢ COLUMNS ▢ COMIX ▢ ZINES + MORE

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SQUARE)



"MAN goes into the NOISY
CROWD TO DROWN his
OWN CLAMOUR of SILENCE"



"The Last Hours meeting" illustration: Edd - edd@rnzine.co.uk

Last Hours Issue 17 - Summer 2008

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Team LH:

Jordan College:
 Edd - Lord Asriel
 Natalie - Marisa Coulter
 Isy - Lyra
 Jas - Serafina Pekkala
 Tom Fiction - Pantalaimon
 PJ - Roger
 Chris Lever - Iorek
 Gaby - Xaphania

Gyptians (writers):
 Mikey D, Chris 12oh5,
 Alice Scum, Kim, Jon
 Williams, Conspiracy
 Tom, Phil Chokeword, Joe
 Watson, Joe Gorky, Tom
 Fiction, Jon Active, Shaun
 Peters, Pavel Move, Tim
 Holehouse, Tim Forster,
 Itch Fox, Kathleen, Martin
 Handforth, Brenda Lone,
 Millie Tant, Antonis, Vince
 plus a host of others

Magisterium (artists):
 Steve Larder, Shaun
 Peters, Paul Stapleton,
 Laura Hughes, A-K Laine,
 Melvin Galapon, Sophie
 Burrows, Tom Hall, Freya
 Harrison, Marc Ellerby,
 William Exley, Leah
 Stewart

FACTS:

Idiot box
www.lasthours.org.uk

Trojan Worms:
edd@rnzine.co.uk

Parcel bombs:
 Last Hours, Po Box 382
 456-458 The Strand
 London, WC2R 0DZ,
 UK

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A fifth birthday & an ending

One day at my university a visiting tutor appeared bemoaning how students don't work enough anymore, or at least not as much as he did back in the day. He then went on to wax lyrical about how wonderful it is to watch the sun rise after pulling an all-nighter. He either doesn't know what he's talking about or is clinically insane; or perhaps both. To get the new issue done I had to pull too many late nights; it was worth it (the new issue is wonderful) but I'm not sure I want to do it anymore. This is going to be the last issue that I edit of Last Hours. Issue 18 will be edited by another member, or a number of other members, of the Last Hours editorial collective. This new issue marks the fifth birthday of Last Hours so perhaps its a good time for me to hand over the editing role to someone else so that I can focus on some of my other projects.

These introductions seem to be turning into obligatory comments on late nights and hard work, but it all being worth it in the end. Its also obligatory to say that it is the best issue I think Last Hours has published. And it really is (just as it was all the other times I wrote it)! The theme this issue was 'radical illustration' and we have interviews to match. Principally this issue features some of my favourite artists with interviews with both Josh MacPhee and Nikki McClure. Not to mention the phone interview I got to do with Alan Moore, which has resulted in one the best interviews I've ever conducted; the results of which you can read from page 58.

I, literally, stumbled into Josh MacPhee's table at this year's London Anarchist bookfair. He was on this side of the Atlantic on a research project and had taken the time to come to the bookfair to sell some of the posters from the Just Seeds Visual Resistance artists collective that he's part of. I bought a book he'd edited with Eric Reuland *Realizing the Impossible* and a couple of his prints. After a while I finally got

my act together and sorted out an interview with him. The resulting questions, as well as a selection of his work, can be seen starting at page 40.

Nikki McClure is an artist I've been loosely following since seeing one of her paper cutouts on the cover of a CrimethInc book. She recently published *Collecting Raindrops: The seasons collected* which Natalie and I have fallen in love with. She answered some of our questions on page 66.

Elsewhere in the issue the theme continues with an extended article from Welly, of Artcore zine, offering a brief history on the changing illustration styles that have permeated the world of punk records, fliers and zines. From the stylings of early anarcho-punk through to the more recent art style of illustrators like Mike Bukowski. It offers a concise and fascinating insight into the diverse world of punk imagery. The flip side is Chris Lever's article on how this imagery, and the concept of rebellion, is being commodified and used by the capitalist system to make their money keep going round. Both are interesting, informative and thought provoking articles.

That's not all, but that's all that space allows me to talk about. You'll just have to explore the rest of the issue for yourself, from the many articles on Crass; to the columns, which have been beautifully illustrated by Laura Hughes; and back to the DIY guides including one on flyposting by Isy Morgenmuffel, which marks the first comic she's published in Last Hours!

Here's hoping issue 18 will be even better!

Edd ☼

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ONE NIGHT STAND IN NORTH DAKOTA

By Chris Lever – www.confinedtothelibrary.info

On tackling gender
inequality whilst being
mistaken for a cock rock
band!

One Night Stand in North Dakota are an acoustic two-piece outfit made up of Daniel Ellis and Nathan Griffin from County Durham, and part of a thriving North-East scene that is eagerly awaiting discovery. Titular concerns aside, they remain the only all-male act I would unequivocally recommend any Ladyfest organiser: tackling many a gender inequality, sincerely and intelligently, in their strikingly catchy repertoire.

LH: What do you make of this recent phenomenon of 'celebrity-endorsed carbon offsetting'?

Nathan: There is a strong whiff of shit about the whole thing, but I think there's a tendency for people to criticise any effort not significant enough. I guess it's a move in the right direction but there's a lot of posturing and political band-wagoning. There's a comedian who said he was a serial killer, but it was okay because he'd got a load of other people pregnant. Offsetting your carbon footprint seems similar.

LH: How did you both hook-up?

N: We're both from Pity Me, and were born on the same street.

Daniel: Talking about carbon offsetting, we lived in a street called 'The Orchard' which was full of exotic trees that were bulldozed down for our housing estate.

LH: Where did your band's name come from?

N: I've got mixed feelings about the name. I think

SUNDOWNER

The Lawrence Arms guitarist on his solo project & shooting a video in two takes.

By Kim Ford – unity_asonestandtogether@yahoo.co.uk

Chris McCaughan plays guitar and sings for Chicago punk rock three-piece The Lawrence Arms. Taking a break from the band and going alone with his own acoustic collection of songs he's hit the road with Mike Park [who runs Asian Man Records] under the pseudonym 'Sundowner'. Actually the 'road' probably isn't quite the right word since they're doing all the tour by train (except for the Atlantic ocean bit I guess)! I was lucky enough to interview Chris at the London show in Camden with help from Sam Russo and Adam Apostate.

LH: What inspired you to go alone and why not use the songs you have recorded for Sundowner as The Lawrence Arms songs?

Chris McCaughan: The last record for The Lawrence Arms, 'Oh Calcutta!' we wrote very specifically for and these songs didn't fit into that scheme. I started accumulating all these songs, and as opposed to letting them die, I decided it would be fun to do a record on my own; a lot of the songs weren't right for me to use for The Lawrence Arms. I think they're more appropriate in this format and it's a chance

for me to write a full record on my own.

LH: What's the meaning behind the name of Sundowner?

CM: I wrote a ukulele song which was originally called 'Sundowning' and when I was looking for a name - that was the word that stuck out to me most. I thought I'll just call it Sundowner - I don't want to call it my own name! I have the kind of name that doesn't really ring in your head, most people can't pronounce my last name!

LH: I noticed a shift in lyrical focus from The Greatest Story Ever told to present. A lot of the Sundowner songs sound like they further explore your poetic side. There's references to Li Po and it's all very subtle imagery (e.g. "I dance quarters on the windowsill",

SHORT
INTER-
VIEWS

LAST HOURS

a lot of people see it and think, 'What the hell?' A lot of people shorten it to 'One Night Stand,' which makes us sound like a cock-rock band! Essentially, we were reading an article about South Dakota, where there had been moves to make abortion illegal; to actually override Roe vs. Wade in the State, which would have huge political implications. As a footnote, the article had said, in neighbouring North Dakota, there isn't a single abortionist, and it struck me that the law is only one aspect. We have a very feminist strand to everything we do. A one night stand in North Dakota? It might not be illegal to have an abortion but you still can't get one.

LH: Looking at your lyrics, it's obvious politics feature highly on your agenda. How would you describe the way you approach such topics, lyrically?

N: I've always tried to ask questions that I can't necessarily answer, in songs. I like to try and identify my own shortcomings, or at least play on that a bit. We're all sexist, and we're all hypocrites, no matter what. It's the way things are, but it's important that we try to be better.

LH: Take 'Gardez La France Propre Contaminez L'Angleterre' as an example of a song with lyrics that don't appear instantly accessible; what would you say that song was about?

N: It's a conventional heartbreak song, but I've tried to frame it differently. I was going through a hard time, and I wanted to exorcise some shit. They always say 'write a song, channel it into something,' and it just wasn't adequate. It skips around a lot, that song.

LH: What's it like gigging as an acoustic two-piece?

N: We've been really lucky. We've had loads of really good opportunities since we started, which I don't think either of us have experienced in prior bands. We seem to go down well on bills with punk and hardcore bands. We've played with Tackleberry from Germany, and for some reason it worked. People do respond to it. We've also played with Neva Denova. They did a split with Bright Eyes back in the day, and it was a very hip gig to be at. I did feel, that night, we were articulating some ideas people hadn't been exposed to. It's always more of a buzz to play to people who start off looking at you like 'What the hell are these guys doing?'

D: I like it when you get parents, or older folk coming up to you and saying that they like what you were singing about.

N: Dads and Mams tend to really be into it. I don't know why. The best place to play is a party with your mates, where everyone can sing along, and there's no doorman and bar.

LH: Have either of you been 'Redwatched' yet?

N: No. I contemplated sending a photo, but I was advised against it.

LH: I remember having a chat with Andy Shocker when he was tutoring at Durham, a few days after he heard he'd been 'Redwatched' (www.redwatch.co.uk/nereds.html). He was obviously worried, but told me he'd spoken to Billy Bragg about it, who said he should think of it as a 'badge of honour.'

N: He actually advised me against sending my photo in. He said it's not worth it. Not Billy Bragg I mean. I don't have regular contact with Billy, though I have spoken to him on the phone. My Dad knows him from the Miner's Strike, and he played the 20th anniversary of the Miner's Gala in Durham. I was away at the time, and was gutted to miss it, but I got a phone call, and it was Billy Bragg.

LH: What did he say?

N: He's really sound. There's a photo kicking about from the time of the strike where Billy Bragg's holding me as a baby. He made some joke about how it was a shame I wasn't there, as we could have recreated the picture. 📷

<http://onsind.googlepages.com>

"today I've seen a dragon on the ripped and worn out armrest"). Where does all of this come from?

CM: That might be without me knowing! I went to school for literature and creative writing. I like to read - I read a lot of poetry and I've read a lot of fiction. I like that stuff, I guess some of the lyrics on this record are more poetic than some of The Lawrence Arms stuff. I haven't written in a long time, so it's definitely a little more obvious on the Sundowner record for sure.

LH: How is the tour going? And what's it like touring with Mike Park?

CM: Touring with Mike is awesome - I've known Mike since I was 17 years old. Mike Park is the reason I still play music. This is the guy who gave me chances to make records and do tours and I'm totally indebted to him. He's the reason why I am able



Still from the Sundowner video, 'The War is Noise'

to continue to do this, so to hang out with him is awesome. He asked me about a year ago, he said, "I'm going to book this tour and I want you to come with me, we're gonna ride the trains and its gonna be more of a vacation than a tour." And I was like, "Absolutely!" There's no way I wouldn't do it!

LH: What motivates you to tour so constantly?

CM: Well you know, this last year The Lawrence Arms only did one big tour. I did some tours on my own - so I guess I really have been the one who can't stop travelling. But I think this is my last trip for a while because I've been going pretty hard. In the last five weeks. I've been in Chicago, New York City, Hawaii, San Francisco, England; it's fucking crazy! Part of the reason I'm so exhausted is I

haven't really been home and I haven't rested in a long time. It's okay because it's been good and it's fun playing by yourself and it's a totally new experience for me. Everyone's been really cool and nice to me and responsive and so I can't complain. I'm lucky to get to travel a lot; it's been my life for a while, so its pretty cool.

LH: What's it like having a reputation as such a bunch of wild boozers on tour?

CM: Well it's tough! I've been having to turn down beers all night only because my first night here I got so hammered I've been trying to recover! You know its tough begin a 'crew guy' who likes to drink because everyone likes to buy you drinks and if I drank them all I'd be dead! This is hilarious, but Lemmie [of Motorhead] once said, 'If I took every shot of whiskey people bought me I'd be long, long

DICK LUCAS

OF THE SUBHUMANS & CITIZEN FISH

"It's better to sing along to a song than to watch TV and think everything is unchangable. That way lies oblivion!" Dick Lucas talks about optimism, being in a band since the early 80s and his forays into creating artwork. It wasn't quite what I'd imagine him painting!

Interview by Edd – edd@rnzine.co.uk Illustration by: Shaun Sepr – www.sp-sepr.co.uk

I had a chance recently to sit down with Dick Lucas; singer of legendary bands Citizen Fish and Subhumans. Upstairs in the Chats Palace, Hackney, we chatted about life 20 years after forming the band, and the painting he's recently started doing.

LH: So why have you guys successively decided to come back and play more shows?

Dick: Well this goes back to '98, which is already ten years ago, which is the lifetime of several normal lasting bands. It was just the idea that Trotsky and Phil had to, 'Oh lets play the old Subs stuff

again'. Me and Bruce were a bit cynical about it so we put it to the test at a practice and all the old memories from ages ago just flooded back and it sounded really good, and it felt really good to do it again. Releasing the inner teenager or whatever it was. So we thought, 'Ok well we'll do a couple of gigs' and that was brilliant. So we thought, 'Ok we'll do a UK tour and a European tour, and a US tour' and after that we just kept going, we didn't stop, well you might as well. Meanwhile we kept Citizen Fish going in the background because that had been going since 1990. So we kept it all going.

"We just blasted the song out of his car. We didn't have a tripod for the camera so we just sat it on his hood and set up the shot and then I stood there and he took the cards and it literally took the lesser part of an afternoon to make!"

so hopefully the next one will be different again.

it to people who wanted it on the internet.

LH: The video on your Myspace for 'This War is Noise' is a great tribute to 'Subterranean Homesick Blues'. Are you a big fan of Bob Dylan, why did you chose to do the video this way?

CM: Yeah, I'm a fan of Bob Dylan. Some stuff more than others but when you have that big of a catalogue it can't all be good, you know. It took two takes, that's true, and we used the first one. It's in an alleyway behind Brendan's house and basically me and Brendan were like, "Okay what's the easiest video we could make?" We just blasted the song out of his car. We didn't have a tripod for the camera so we just sat it on his hood and set up the shot and then I stood there and he took the cards and it literally took the lesser part of an afternoon to make! But it took months to actually get our shit together and get

LH: Anything you would like to add?

CM: I know it's been a long time since The Lawrence Arms have been really gotten over here and really done a full proper tour and we're sorry. We just haven't been able to make it happen for whatever reason and hopefully we can make it happen in the future sometime. It's just nice to be here playing again and tonight was so rad and I had so much fun, and everyone's so nice and responsive. I feel really good about it. As far as The Lawrence Arms go in the future: this year's gonna be pretty mellow, but we'll probably be a band for a long time. These guys are my best friends. We'll see what happens - I'm not sure what the future holds. ☺

dead.' There's a certain danger that comes along with having that kind of reputation, but at the same time I like to have fun and I'm only on tour for a short amount of time so I guess excessive drinking has been part of it!

LH: Was it a natural shift on 'Oh Calcutta!' to do more duets or was that part of the concept?

CM: Oh yeah me and Brendan were like "Hey man we're gonna write songs on our own but when we make this record we're gonna sing as much of it together as we can." I just like the way of unifying the band and I thought everyone always

tries to make records that were some sort of evolution to the music and 'The Greatest Story' was a really polarised record in terms of style and singing duties. The goal was to make it as much of a unified piece of music as we could and we figured the way of doing that was to sing as much of it together as possible. So it was totally conscious and we talked about it before we wrote the songs. We knew what we wanted to try and make.

LH: Will this be a continuation on the next record?

CM: I don't know. It's hard to say. I like to think that we've never made the same record,

www.myspace.com/thesundownermusic



LH: You've started doing artwork, or at least you might not have just started, it's just I've only become aware of it... Dick: Well I've always done arty things. Quite a few things have ended up as covers, starting with the *Worlds Apart* cover which I drew when I was 19 or 18 at school. That was the only good thing I drew at school and I thought well if I trace bits of it, and sharpen areas of it that might look quite good as a cover. Then there was a bunch of collages I got into doing, which ended up being Citizen Fish covers like 'Millenium Madness'. So I was into doing collages a lot.

I started messing about with paint again, I don't know, three or four years ago and one of them just seemed to fit the theme of '*Deadline*', the split with Leftover Crack and Citizen Fish. Because it was two bands

it was really difficult to get consensus, it's hard enough getting agreement with four members in one band about what the cover should look like or what the album should be called. And then you've got four other members of another band on the other side of the planet the scope for disagreement was massive. So when I suggested this painting and Sturgeon from Leftover Crack said, 'Yes, brilliant!' I said, 'Look guys, basically they thought this was good so we may as well go with it because there are no more ideas!' Because we're musicians and not really artists in terms of visual artists, and LP covers are the most difficult things to get together in terms of artwork.

LH: I was looking at your paintings and it wasn't quite what I imagined you would be painting, partly I suppose because of the stereotypes that exist of

FALL OF EFRAFA

"Religion serves only to create a culture of fear and a hatred of non-humans, women, queers, people with differently coloured skin, the natural world and, above all, a hatred of ourselves."

Interview by Isy Morgenmuffel – katchoo63@googlemail.com

all of Efrafa are an epic melodic crust band from Brighton. The band recently released their second album: '*Elil*'. Their songs took original inspiration from *Watership Down*, and explore the struggle for self-determination and freedom against fascism, religion and authority. This is an interview that Isy Morgenmuffel conducted with George, the band's drummer, discussing the band's thoughts and ideas, and the fact that after the trilogy is finished it will mark the end of the band.

LH: *Ows/a* was focused on nature and its defence against human aggression. Elil means predator – what kind of predatory behaviour are you talking about?

George: Alex writes all of the lyrics, which

we all read and comment on before we commit to using them in songs. The lyrics in *Elil* focus on the destructive nature of organised religion: systems that are used to exercise social control, whilst encouraging apathy and the destruction of the natural world. These systems force us to focus on a fictitious spiritual existence whilst creating a complete disregard for the physical, real, world. The bible tells us to "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." [Genesis 1:28], thus teaching us to follow a rigid hierarchy, which is defined by violence being done by those on the top of the hierarchy to those below, making slaves out of all non-human life. Religion

serves only to create a culture of fear and a hatred of non-humans, women, queers, people with differently coloured skin, the natural world and, above all, a hatred of ourselves. I'm not even sure if the word 'predator' is a strong enough word to describe the evils of religion, because, in the wild, a predator will never consume so much that it wipes out its life source and therefore, causes its own demise, which we seem to be doing pretty well!

LH: Man against nature is an antagonism that's persisted throughout history, with the exploitation and destruction of nature being the basis of our civilisation. It is a struggle you have focused on with your music. What does it mean to you both as a band and personally, is this a struggle as part of your daily life too?

G: Until the rise of capitalism and industrial civilisation the concept of humans existing outside of the natural world would have been unthinkable. Since the beginnings of agriculture humanity has started to live outside of and in opposition to the ecosystems with which we once had symbiotic relationship. Once communities started to grow and form in to cities, humans started to exceed the

what anarcho-punk imagery looks like. Was it deliberate to subvert it?

Dick: Oh, no. It's just much easier to paint things like the sky, sea, rocks, clouds and water to a point because they're all free flowing objects, well not even objects they're things that can almost be any colour or any shape but still resemble them. If you ask me to draw a portrait of someone I'm going to get really stuck. I can't draw 'things' or paint 'things'. I just like what happens when you put colours together with a brush. And if it looks good it becomes something you'd like to see in real life but doesn't exist in real life rather than anything dead serious. I enjoy doing it in terms of a new headspace thing. But it's not all skulls and skeletons and death and

bombs going off because that'd be too difficult!

LH: I was going to ask you about staying optimistic and positive, because I read an old interview with you where you were saying that you'd like some of your songs to be more dated than they are...

Dick: Yeah (laughs) because if there was no war anymore they'd all be out of date.

LH: So how do you keep positive after all this time when it's still the same old bullshit.

Dick: Well it's two sides of the same coin. It's the negative content saying 'This is fucked and that is fucked' to summarise fairly negatively; the flip-side of that is the ability to express it rather than not saying anything about it. It's a weird positive but it is positive to get

it out of yourself psychologically, and it might be positive to the extent of turning a few heads around to the realities of what's going on. Rather than people just accepting war, poverty, environmental destruction and chaos as the natural order of things, which it isn't. And people should be angry even if it's just in small bursts. It's better to sing along to a song than to watch TV and think that everything is unchangable and going to be the same forever. That way lies complete oblivion and just the total loss of the human soul who then go on to accept a lot of things. And they will get depressed and up goes the suicide rate and poverty rate. There's a lot of depressing shit out there and so you have kid violence and drug abuse as a means to

escape reality. And a lot of people below the richness line, or whatever it's called, just feel fucked off with everything. And if you put down these thoughts on something that goes out to more people than you can ever meet or see either as music, or a book or whatever it'll allow people to feel that sense of contact or unity that people outside feel the same way as they do. Which is called influencing people or whatever. But the basic positive of the influence is that people don't feel alone in their thoughts anymore. ☒

<http://www.citizenfish.com/>

carrying capacities of the ecosystems in which they lived. This meant that resources had to be sourced from other areas, which gave rise to war, slavery and the destruction of the natural world. I believe that we can't sustain our current existence and that without significant changes being made to the way we structure our communities we're going to be in even more trouble than we are now. However, I don't necessarily believe that the destruction of the natural world should be our only reason to strive for radical social change. Even if capitalism wasn't destroying the planet, it still serves to enslave humans and non-humans alike. This is something that is a part of all of our lives.

LH: The sound quality is incredibly good on this record. How and where was it recorded and is the production process something that you all get stuck into?

"I'm not even sure if the word 'predator' is a strong enough word to describe the evils of religion"

G: My brother, Peter Miles, has recorded all of our records. He is amazing at what he does and is incredibly adaptable. We recorded *Elil* at my mum's house, which is in Devon on the southern border of Dartmoor. It was an incredibly inspiring location to make a record in. In the band, we all have very strong ideas about how we want the records to sound and Pete manages to bring all our opinions together and add some of his own experienced judgments.

LH: The last in the trilogy will then be *Inlé* – have you started writing for it, and what comes next, when the trilogy is finished?

G: We have started writing new songs, but they are all very far from completion. *Inlé* will be the end of *Fall Of Efrafa*, but there is a possibility that we will do a split LP with *Icos* from Sweden before we make *Inlé*. What comes next? I have no idea except that *Fall Of Efrafa* will be no more.

LH: What are some of the other projects band members are involved in, both musical and political?

G: Stevie and Neil have recently started a rock'n'roll band called *Black Storm* that will hopefully be playing gigs soon. They're

very much influenced by bands like *Black Sabbath* and *Led Zeppelin*. I heard a rehearsal tape a few days ago and all I can say is bring your ear plugs!

As a band, our own political involvement and projects vary. My own interests lie in projects that are more focussed on my close community, because I find it difficult to connect to anything on a larger scale. For example, I'm working on putting together a zine of writings by wimmin involved in punk, activist and DIY communities. This will focus on patriarchy/ sexism and the effect that has on wimmin in terms of self-esteem and insecurity. More specifically, it will address what they would like the men in their communities to do to help facilitate necessary changes, with a view to making a follow-up zine written by men. I guess the idea is to try and create some kind of dialogue. Also, Mikey and myself are working on *Between The Lines* 2008, which is a DIY Hardcore Punk Fest at the Cowley Club in Brighton with a focus on radical workshops and discussions. ☒

More information on the *Fall of Efrafa* is at www.fallofebrafa.com. For more on *Between the Lines*: myspace.com/betweenthelinesbrighton. For the zine project email George at crustlord@yahoo.com.

DAISY'S VEGAN CATERING

A DIY catering company that dares to try and recreate some of Austria's most famous dishes in the most blasphemous way possible: without meat.

Interview by Chris 12o5 – christinasophiadixon@googlemail.com
Illustration by: Sophie Burrows – eradicatetjane@googlemail.com



Vegans who experiment with food rather than repetitively consuming the same old familiars like vegan chilli and pasta salad should get a resounding thumbs up. As a current resident of Austria I can see how people feel alienated from the traditional cuisine as it is so heavily laden with meat and dairy products, which is why the existence of Daisy's vegan catering is remarkable in itself. A DIY catering company that dares to try and recreate some of Austria's most famous dishes in the most blasphemous way possible: without meat.

LH: Can you give a brief history of how the project started? How was the idea born, how did it get off the ground?

Daisy's: About three years ago, I was asked if I wanted to cater for the International Noise Conspiracy. Apparently, the promoter, who happened to be a friend of mine, was too busy to do it himself. Anyway, I agreed. However, it seemed like a lot of work—too much for just one person. So I asked this friend of mine, Joschi, if he wanted to come on board. He did and there we were—cooking a vegan version of a typically Austrian dish called "Speckknödel" for a bunch of Swedish rockers. We definitely wanted to do that more often. Raising awareness of veganism and making a few bucks just sounded pretty cool to us. A few weeks later, our friend Daisy joined. Turns out she was planning on starting her own catering service, too. We decided that she should serve as a name-sake for our little "company". When Joschi left last year my

flat mate Bertl joined us.

LH: What kind of events do you typically cater for? Which is the strangest one you've ever done?

D: We usually do Punk-Rock-related shows and festivals. We sell a number of servings of any given dish to the promoter at a cheap price. In return, we get to sell our stuff to the audience. In Austria we have this weird tradition of quite big shows featuring 10 or so bands that take place in rather rural areas. A lot of "ordinary" people usually show up there because there's nothing else to do on a Friday night. There are hardly any vegetarians among them. At some point, however, they are drunk enough to taste our stuff and they usually find it delicious. Of course, we cater for regular Punk gigs with a mostly vegan/vegetarian crowd, too.

LH: Austria is not exactly famous for its vegetarian and vegan cuisine, how exactly does Daisy's fit in with this meat culture? Why do you think it is necessary to cater for vegans?

D: Well, the idea behind the whole thing was to raise awareness of veganism. It wasn't so much about cooking for vegans but rather making vegan alternatives to meat available for people who otherwise wouldn't bother to even think about going vegetarian/vegan because they simply wouldn't know what to eat. Therefore, we mainly offer traditional Austrian meat dishes—only they're vegan. I believe this is way more effective than showing the same images of tortured animals over

and over again. On the other hand, vegans are usually very grateful when they come out to a show and can choose between a number of vegan snacks.

LH: One common criticism of specialist vegan food is that it is expensive, yet you state one of your aims as trying to keep costs low. How do you achieve this?

D: It's true, we try to keep costs low. That is, we sell our products at the same price as their non-vegetarian counterparts are usually sold at. We achieve that by buying the raw materials we need (lots of soy etc.) in bulk. Of course, keeping the price low means we don't really make a lot of money out of each serving. However, we often sell our products by the hundreds.

LH: What is the most popular dish on Daisy's menu?

D: Right now, our best seller is the "Schnitzel Semmel". That's a Wiener Schnitzel in a roll with various sauces.

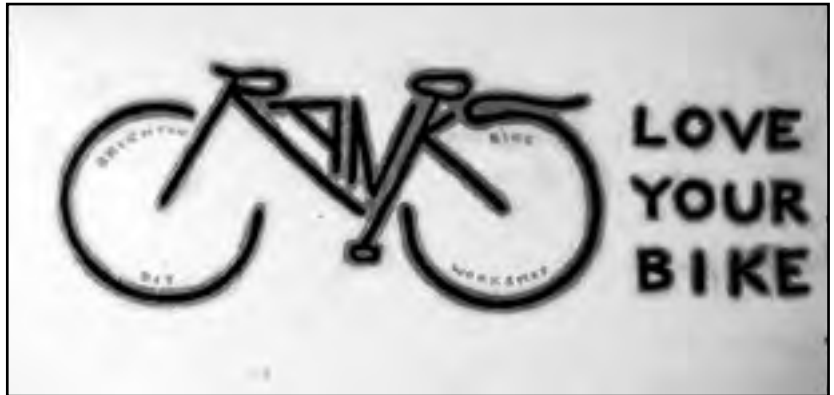
LH: If someone was looking to start up a similar operation in their area, what would you consider to be the essential basics they require? Any advice you could offer?

D: Running a vegan catering service like ours can be fun and very rewarding but it is a lot of work. You've got to be patient and you've got to have a lot of spare time. ☺

www.myspace.com/daisys_vegancatering

CRANKS

A new bike workshop in Brighton created by bike lovin' volunteers aims to get people onto two wheels and keep them there.



Article by Isy Morgenmuffel – katchoo63@googlemail.com

Cranks is a DIY bike workshop in Brighton. It's based in a rented workshop in the Kemptown area, has a full range of tools, recycles old bikes and parts, and is open to the public three times a week. It's now nearly a year old, run entirely on the time and energy of bike lovin' volunteers.

Cranks was set up by people involved in grassroots projects, anarchist resistance and community spaces so the spirit of Cranks is all about self organisation. As with other community based bike workshops, this means that there are no paid experts who will fix your bike for you, or anyone trying to make money out of it. What there is is a space with tools and bike stands, parts and books to use, along with people who will help you check over your bike or try to fix it with you.

Cycling is a great mode of transport with a much lower environmental impact and is of course good exercise – and bike workshops get people, regardless of age, gender or ability, learning to love their bike, looking after it, understanding how it works, learning to do the smaller and bigger repairs themselves. Lots of bikes get neglected, go rusty, or don't get parts replaced when needed. And many people might not know how to adjust their brakes or gears and either can't afford to go to a bike shop or just don't get round to it. I know I've been one of these people! And that I'm guilty of sadly neglecting to take care of my poor bicycle. DIY bike workshops offer access to cheap repairs (use of the workshop and second hand parts is all by donation) and bike care. And bikes that run more smoothly are more fun to ride, in turn hopefully encouraging more cycling!

Cranks also say that "We were particularly interested in creating a helpful and safe environment for women and people on low incomes to come and not feel intimidated about work and knowledge usually only available if you can afford to pay for it. Instead we want to demystify the bicycle and remind people how much fun and empowering cycling can be."

It isn't just about maintaining and polishing up fancy brand new bikes, but also about getting old bikes back on the road, and recycling as many parts as possible. The workshop takes donations of old, unwanted bikes that volunteers can then sort out and sell cheaply, practising their skills along the way. In fact, anyone can come in and build themselves a bike from scrap parts. The workshop is full of boxes labelled 'rear derailleurs' or 'headsets', and is also well stocked with new parts such as brake cable and inner tubes – everything you need really to fiddle with a bike.

The project got underway with some funding to rent the workshop for a year as well as to buy initial tools, and is now almost financially sustainable from donations for tool use and parts and sales of refurbished bikes. A collective of about 15 people run the space, meet fortnightly and staff a rota to keep it open. One day a week is set aside to work on refurbishing bikes or skillsharing amongst the collective. There's been a bike film night, and plans to run bike maintenance courses, especially for women. Bike workshops are great, so look out for one near you! 🚲

*Cranks is open 11am-5pm Fridays and Saturdays, 12-5pm Sundays.
22 Chapel Street, Brighton BN2 1RQ
www.crank.org.uk - cranksbikes@gmail.com*



LADYFEST LONDON 2008:

"WE ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE A FESTIVAL THAT ALLEVIATES THE BOREDOM OF MOST MUSIC AND ARTS FESTIVALS"

Article by Alice Emanuel – allyscum@hotmail.com

Ladyfest London has been a long time coming. Firstly, because the last one was in 2002, and there have been dozens around the UK and the world since. Secondly because the first meeting was back in 2006 when May 2008 seemed very far off in the distant future. As it creeps nearer to kick off, somehow the chaos of organising a volunteer run feminist and queer arts festival is starting to fall into place. This year's do will be held from 9th-11th May at the Camden Underworld, the Holloway Resource Centre, and the Islington Arts Factory. Across those days and venues will be workshops, exhibitions, activities and performances by women to engage, inspire, and create.

In preparation, there have been hours and hours of meetings, dozens of benefits of varying themes, stalls at other like-minded events, and thousands of emails back and forth. Those involved have really grafted to create a successful event. As Kate says, "We are trying to achieve a festival that alleviates the boredom of most music and arts festivals. We are trying to raise money for political and arts organising in an independent and creative way. It's easy to be complacent so it would be nice to create something that shakes things up a bit," she adds, "And Ladyfests are vital because they add an otherwise non-existent feminist and rad queer agenda to these homogenous scenes".

Indeed, Ladyfest strives to push its attendees further than your average arts festival, with expressly political aims. While that may deter some members of the public and delight others, all will end up 'taking part' in some way. Some may just go for the music and arts element "but then end up finding out much more" says Terese, "I guess what I personally want to achieve is to provide a space where people can enjoy themselves in a really positive and friendly feminist environment, both people who are

involved in a lot of feminism and other activism who always go to these events but also new people". She continues, "There isn't really an 'audience' in the same way at Ladyfest as there are at other festivals, because everyone is encouraged to take an active part, through talks and workshops, but also at the organising stage. And a lot of the bands, performers, workshops facilitators form part of the 'audience'". Polly agrees, "I think everyone who goes to Ladyfest is a participant, helping to support and create an alternative culture."

As a result, the atmosphere of Ladyfest is a wonderfully inspiring one. "You're surrounded by lots of amazing interesting people and everybody talks to each other, you have some great conversations and make new friends" enthuses Terese, "you end up in this beautiful Ladyfest bubble where you don't ever want to leave".

For those who wish to learn something or just have a good debate, this year's event will include workshops on spirituality, bike maintenance, sexuality, history, discussions around feminist activism, a panel about the connections between feminism and no borders activism, women in prison, and trans-feminism. However, as the organisers say, what generally pulls the punters in are the cultural aspects of the festival and the film and music programme of LFL 2008 looks set to do that.

The Islington Arts Factory will be host to the film screenings and include an impressive range of documentaries, shorts and full-length features made by women from all over the world, exploring female and feminist themes. These include screenings of 'It Changed my Life', Lucy Thane's film about Huggy Bear and Bikini Kill's 1993 UK tour, a double bill of films from Africa, and documentaries on women in London, to name a mere few.

Polly agrees, "I think everyone who goes to Ladyfest is a participant, helping to support and create an alternative culture."

It could be possible just to spend your whole weekend watching films, but the music team at LFL 2008 have been equally ambitious and are finalising an impressive bill of female musicians. While remaining somewhat tight-lipped of the full line up, they are happy to announce the headlining act at the Underworld on opening night will be Kimya Dawson. The appearance of the former member of the Moldy Peaches, anti-folk, lo-fi goddess will no doubt raise some interest, after the success of her songs on the massively popular 'Juno' soundtrack, reaching out to those beyond the punk/Ladyfest ghetto.

Hopefully those who will really benefit from Ladyfest London will be far beyond a world of zines and riot grrrl fans too, with any profits made from the event going towards local London women's and feminist groups. However, the organisers are keen to stress the event is not just relevant for women. Terese says, "All are welcome and past Ladyfests have had a good mix of both men and women attending" and, "there'll be people coming from all over the country and Europe so it's a great place to network if you're involved in activist groups".

There are many reasons to attend Ladyfest London, as Kate sums up: "Because it's for a good cause, because there are some great bands and great events, because you might learn new skills, because you could be inspired to start a new project of your own... because it will be rad fun". ☘

THE FEEDING OF THE EGOS

Jon Active, who has run Active Distribution (a DIY, anarcho distribution service) since 1989, was incensed when Steve Ignorant “reformed” Crass for a one off gig at the London Shepards Bush Empire. Below is his response to Steve’s actions.

Article by Jon Active – jon@activedistribution.org Art by: Jon Active (the cover of the pamphlet he distributed)

Is this an article? More like a rant from a dinosaur, but here goes anyway. The majority of this is an update of a flyer I put out before the Feeding of the Empire gigs that Steve Ignorant did last year. A broken down van and a Belgium punk failing to show up meant I didn’t get to give them to people outside the venue. Recently advertisements for more so-called anarcho-punk bands playing at similar venues in September have appeared so I feel like saying it all again.

I was lucky enough to catch some of my most treasured bands live before they split up and then reformed during a mid life cash crisis. The Dead Kennedys were one of these and I’ll never forget their spirit and passion on stage. They were not an anarcho band and didn’t have the DIY ideals of some of the UK bands at the time but hearing Jello Biafra call out “less of those flashing lights please, we don’t need them” seemed to capture the essence of anti pop punk rock attitude.

*“Is there something I can learn?
Do I need a businessman to promote
my angle?
Can I resist the carrots that fame and
fortune dangle?
I see the velvet zippies in their bondage
gear,
The social elite with safety-pins in their ear,
I watch and understand that it don’t
mean a thing,”
“Punk is dead” - Crass*

By 1978 the punk rock rebellion was dead. Already bands had sold their souls to CBS and EMI and the audiences were

becoming fashion victims of just another pathetic cult. Then Crass came along and gave it a new lease of life. They gave it meaning, inspired us to do things on our own, to believe in our own power, to squat, to protest, to fight back, to say fuck off to the pathetic pseudo punks who posed but didn’t practice.

Crass didn’t play the game; they played their own games. Crass played alternative venues, used alternative media, created their own media, the International Anthem papers and countless flyers and pamphlets. They tried to challenge the capitalism inherent in their industry. They put ‘pay no more than:’ prices on records and seriously cheap door prices. Crass tried to be as anti-capitalist as they could and not be part of the rock n roll spectacle. That is why they inspired a generation, it wasn’t their music but their attitude and actions that made them different, made them significant.

What the farce in Shepherds Bush said is “we don’t care anymore”. “What Crass stood for is no longer relevant”, now punk is just a puppet show for businessmen to profit from. Younger punks who mistake this show as the real deal when it is in reality just a whitewash. The shame is that just one member of Crass, Steve Ignorant, can fuck up the reputation and respect that the band earned and kept by his greed. Steve and the rest of the performers playing out their roles as lackeys of the music business strumming their cocks as they bathe in the strobes are shameful in my opinion. I don’t really care if they make any money from this

event. Steve gets the same considerable royalties that all Crass members still do. What hurts is the betrayal, the renouncing of an ethic: DIY or EMI? Now Steve and chums take the Crass name and dirty it in the filth of a festival of forgetting what mattered.

What does this event promote? Love? Anger? Rather just the promoters bank balance and a sense of nihilism. “I just wanna play my guitar, what does it matter, it’s not important”. Maybe it’s not important to those who’ve given up, those who don’t care, those who just want a beer and a good night out, maybe pick up some skirt too eh? It does matter though to those who still care, those who still kick against the pricks and it matters that an ideal can be degraded by the weight of hypocrisy coming from those that hold the microphones and stand on the stage. It matters that there are still many bands, labels, organisations, squats, co-ops, activists trying to do something worthwhile, still trying to fight back without being compromised into irrelevance by the capitalist machine. People who work and play for their beliefs and ideals, not just to see their names in lights or in the papers or to pocket a few extra quid. “NOT EMI” meant not doing things with or as capitalists do. Bands promoters and labels that copy the business parasites are no more DIY than Madonna or Billy Graham. Life is a continuous run of compromises and our ethics determine where we draw the line. Pretending to be Crass, playing at the Shepherds Bush Empire is a step way over the line. Anyone who thinks this gig



What does this event promote? Love? Anger? Rather just the promoters bank balance and a sense of nihilism. "I just wanna play my guitar, what does it matter, it's not important". Maybe it's not important to those who've given up, those who don't care, It does matter though to those who still care.

is cool either never understood the significance of Crass or just doesn't care anymore.

*"Yes that's right, punk is dead
It's just another cheap product for the
Consumers head
Bubblegum rock on plastic transistors
Schoolboy sedition backed by big time promoters
CBS promote the Clash
Ain't for revolution, it's just for cash
Punk became a fashion just like hippy used to be
Ain't got a thing to do with you or me"
"Punk is dead" - Crass*

Steve and the lads successfully turned Crass into a rock n roll act and everyone had a great time. Dancing to the big men posturing on stage with fancy flashing lights blinding them to the reality of what a load of shit it was. Comments like: "Wasn't it great to hear Crass played professionally" and, "The bouncers were amiable" just reek of the ignorance that this event pandered to. I pity the kid who puts up You Tube clips on his Myspace site of his gig and says underneath a picture of a blonde cliché on the stage, "People I most want to meet: Eve Libertene." It wasn't her onstage. Only one member of Crass was on stage, others watched, others stayed well away. Penny Rimbaud the main voice of Crass since they split up and author of most of their work said in an interview recently:

"I acknowledge and respect Steve's right to do this, but I do regard it as a betrayal of the Crass ethos," he says, citing a Crass lyric from 24 years ago that could have been written with such an occasion in mind. The lyric in question speaks of bands performing "rehashed versions of The Feeding of the 5,000", describing them as "the Feeding of the Five Knuckle Shuffle". And the more he speaks the angrier he gets.

"I believe there are people coming in from Japan, who probably bought the whole deal like you would have for Queen in Paris or something," Rimbaud almost spits. "What has that got to do with the covert underground political movement that Crass was a part of?"

A NIGHT OF NOSTALGIA, NONSENSE AND BETRAYAL
A Bad Performance in its Entirety of...

THE FEEDING OF THE EGOS



A Total "Sell-Out" of DIY Anarcho-Punk Ethics by
Steve Ignorant and Careless Collaborators

A.k.a. "The Bleeding of the 2000"

Anarchy is not for sale by Ticketmaster,
"But this ain't for revolution,
it's just for cash."

Who do you think they are fooling?

Those who went to the gig no doubt witnessed how powerful the force of Crass's music could be but they have also witnessed how the energy of Crass, like the rebellion of the Sex Pistols, can be recuperated by capitalism quite easily once we passively hand it to them on a plate. When we are happy to collaborate with the entertainment industry.

An event like this and the ones at the Academy venues could have been done differently. It could have been a genuine salute to the spirit of the time. It could have reminded us of what it was all about in a positive way. Imagine if Steve had got back in contact with the squatting scene, imagine if he had hooked up with Reclaim the Future or Reknaw or someone still doing squat events. Imagine if they had done a series of small gigs in cool community centres with stalls from campaign groups and DIY distros, with no stupid security, overpriced bar, £25 tickets etc. Imagination, I guess, is something that revolutionaries have rather than rockstars. The Subhumans played a community centre in Hackney a few weeks ago, they got the money they asked for, as did all the other three acts. The door price was £5, there was no hired security, no ticket master no money-grabbing promoter. The event raised £650 as a benefit split between two organisations. Oh and apparently everyone had a great time, fun even! So why can't the punk scene get itself together and organise alternatives. Don't give such bands as Conflict, The Subhumans, an excuse to play at such sad farcical events as Rebellion (sic), Wasted, The Academy gigs etc. Get out there, make our scene worthy of its name and not just a shameful parody of what was and might have been. ☘



My experience with women illustrators has been limited, increased somewhat only recently through the introduction of *Juxtapoz* magazine in my life (thank-you lan) and my own curious prying. Art for me, like pretty much everything else in the world, has always been an area dogged with gender discrepancies, inequality and control (to read on check out *The Guerrilla Girls*), and with that in mind I approached the world of illustration rather sceptically. As an outsider, illustration to me, like art, came across as male dominated with public perceptions of genre being tainted by gender stereotyping (such as the illustration of children's books being aligned with women illustrators). Scratching beneath the surface, I found, however, women illustrators breaking boundaries, not just with regards to genre, but by tackling topical issues such as queer culture and politics; producing illustration not just for illustration's sake, but as a means of being heard.

Miami based Cristy C. Road is an exam-

IS THAT A DILDO?

The illustration of Cristy C. Road.

Article by Laura Way - lauraannway@gmail.com Artwork: Cristy C Road - www.croadcore.org/

PRETTY LONDON IN JANUARY

and the death of Ahmed Sanaqra in Balata Refugee camp

Article by Mika Minio - mika@plattfom.org

Since being deported from Palestine in summer 2005, I've been living and working in London. Living in a pretty house in Tower Hamlets overlooking Victoria Park, with foxes, swaying beech trees and a milkman.

Yet even here, Palestine doesn't leave you. Last Friday morning at dawn a friend of mine was shot and left to bleed to death by Israeli soldiers in Balata Refugee Camp.

When I read the email sent at 10:23am – the email that said, "I don't know if you heard. Ahmed Sanaqra was killed yesterday in Balata." My fist clenched and hit the wall. As grief and deep, deep rage took hold of me, an inner part of me wanted, needed, to do something immediate and direct, to shake everything, to pause 'normality' with a scream. Yet the world went on as before, with no break in the emails, shopping, fixing a leaking boiler, meetings. London continues as usual, and on Friday morning a friend

was gunned down - because he said "I will not submit".

Ahmed Sanaqra, nicknamed "Sanquur" by most of Balata, was chatting with three friends in his family's house early Friday morning. Outside, undercover Israeli gunmen dressed as Palestinians quietly moved through the alley, surrounding his house. Spotting Sanquur through the window, the gunmen opened fire, seriously wounding him. He tried to escape with his friends, but was too injured to keep moving. The Israelis chased him down and fired more bullets into his body, before leaving him to bleed to death.

We ran through the alleys together

When I lived in Balata, my flat overlooked the entrance to the camp, and thus almost every Israeli invasion. Sanquur and his friend Bilal would climb the three stories to my roof to throw bricks and rotten melons onto the armoured Jeeps passing below. The two of them would run right up to the Jeeps' windows to cover them in paint. When Israeli gunmen tried to shoot those in the open, Sanquur would

take shelter in the alley to my flat.

One day I was standing blocking a Jeep from entering the camp, but decided to step back. As I moved towards the closest alleyway, Sanquur came running from around the corner with a bottle of white paint to throw at the Israeli Jeep (not having realised I was in between him and the Jeep). Unable to grip the bottle, he shouted at me to jump, and gave the bottle a downwards tilt. I jumped above the shattering glass, escaping with newly-white boots and Sanquur's deep apologies. Sanquur can be seen throwing a better-aimed bottle of paint onto a Jeep's windscreen near the end of this short video. <http://www.balatacamp.net/filmcollective/aziza.mpg>

Sometimes we ran through the alleys together in the dark, in search of the invading Jeeps. We often ended up sheltering behind the same wall when the soldiers opened fire, and we'd search for stones to throw when supplies invariably ran out. One evening Sanquur pulled me back roughly into an alley; just as



ple of such exceptions to the rule and is carrying the flag high for the role of art in social change. Starting out at the age of 14 making punk zines, Cristy's illustrations have featured on posters, in magazines, on records. Cristy's work brings together a sense of rawness and reality grit whilst addressing contemporary social issues - illustration is merely an extension of what affects her life. Illustration is so often a reproduction for a brief, a nameless and static piece which has limited purpose. The use of the personal within work is refreshing. Cristy speaks to that which is important to her and is, at times, autobiographical but is immersing herself in her art throughout.

In a society in which women are bombarded with fashion-constrained ideals of beauty, Cristy embraces the real; highlighting the beauty found so often in those not conforming to traditional beauty regulations. This defiance of adhering to the rules seems to come easier within contemporary illustration, than say, photography, with illustrators

increasingly blurring the boundaries of traditional femininity and reinterpreting meanings of gender. Tara McPherson, for instance, whether intentionally or not, is able to craft women who bend reality and take on 'unnatural' qualities. Cristy's characters have un-kept hair, an aversion to mainstream fashion and body modifications a plenty. Definitions of gender, what is masculine, what is feminine, are turned on their head with boys wearing eyeliner, girls brandishing strap-ons and, at times, the distinction between female and male breaks down completely. This is gender fucking at its finest; dismantling the power relations inherent in society and readdressing both gender and sexuality. This portrayal of real people and real life, contribute to the work's engaging authenticity.

Cristy C. Road's work tackles a range of issues alongside feminism, gender and image. Her art has addressed politics (such as "You can't hug with nuclear arms"), queer culture (for instance "Dykes feel no shame!" or "Feel no guilt in your

Definitions of gender, what is masculine, what is feminine, are turned on their head with boys wearing eyeliner, and girls brandishing strap-ons

desire"), punk rock, teenagers, Latino identity, inclusiveness, racism and even cycling ("The pedal power don't stop"). Whether her messages are outright (such as her piece on the celebration of Spanish women's militias) or more tongue in cheek, her work is making waves. Road has to date had two publications, both of which can be found at Microcosm Publishing – Indestructible, an illustrated novel, and Distance Makes the Heart Grow Sick, a collection of postcards. Cristy is currently working on a second illustrated novel titled Bad Habits. ☐

For more about Cristy C. Road and her work: <http://www.croadcore.org/>

a volley of bullets hit the wall where I had been standing, spraying shards of shrapnel and cement at us. A week later, I felt an explosion as I walked down the main Market Street, and saw Ahmed stand up and run with blood streaming down his face. An unexploded bomb had gone off as he bent to look at it. We bundled him into a car bound for the hospital.

Beating the odds of life

Sanquur was 18 when I was deported. In the two and a half years since, he became an armed resistance fighter with widespread support in Balata. Unlike some other fighters, he refused to be bought off or to submit, believing that when the Israeli Army invaded Balata's streets and alleys, the residents of the camp had reason to defend themselves. He felt that this right to resist could not be signed away in exchange for salaried jobs as police officers.

Nobody from Balata has

carried out a suicide attack since the Abu Ayyesh and Abu Saleem boys attacked a settlement in the West Bank in spring 2003. Yet the fighters who refuse to submit and continue firing at invading tanks and Jeeps are systematically hunted down, one by one.

Sanquur survived at least three direct assassination attempts by the Israeli army. In April 2007 his younger brother was killed and Sanquur shot in the hand and stomach, but he got away by running faster than the soldiers. While still in intensive care, the army raided the hospital: Sanquur climbed out of bed and slipped out.

In 2006, the main police station, barely standing after six years of tank fire, was bulldozed on top of him. Sanquur lay silent in the rubble for three days, forced to drink his own piss, while soldiers stepped on him. His escape, despite the odds, allowed an unlikely glimmer of hope to survive in Balata. His

survival began to symbolize Balata's tenacity for continued struggle, "sumud". Camp residents clutched tight to the belief that, unlike everybody else who has been killed or imprisoned, Sanquur would survive, free.

Carry on fighting

Dreams end. Last Friday, the Israeli Duvdevan unit cornered and executed Sanquur. I haven't worked out yet how to grieve when my friends are blown apart by rockets or receive a bullet in the head, even though it happens time and time again. Hani Hashash, Disco Skipper, Mohammed Abu Lel.

My rage wants to consume me, but has no target. Hours after reading that Sanquur had been executed, fury made me shake as my bus passed through the City. I don't want to choke it down, to not feel. Bell hooks (author of *Ain't I a Woman?: Black Women and Feminism*) describes rage as "a necessary aspect of resist-

ance struggle". But what to direct it at? These feelings don't translate into writing a letter to my MP, nor demonstrating or blocking a road. The continuity in daily life fuels the fury, demanding a rupture, a break in our privilege and comfort of pubs, movies, shops: life and business as usual.

Honestly, I don't know how to live with my grief and rage. The only answer I have is, if our political struggles are effective and fulfilling, to throw ourselves into them wholeheartedly. Together with our friends who are still alive and feeling, to hold each other up and carry on fighting.

Love & struggle, mika ☐

If "Balata Refugee Camp" means nothing to you, or you don't understand why Sanquur became a resistance fighter, see <http://www.balatacamp.net> or watch <http://www.archive.org/details/balata>
Other projects Mika is involved with: www.platformlondon.org; www.lcap.org.uk; www.climatecamp.org.uk



Yes, making jam or growing your own tomatoes then making them into chutney is a completely amazing and revelatory experience! Its not just for old people but is punk fucken rock because it's all about the DIY.

Nowadays we can go into a supermarket and the majority of what's on offer isn't fresh fruit and veg but preserves, tinned and frozen foods, and a huge range of processed meals, some of which are exciting and tasty and a lot of which are just lots of salt and artificial flavourings, fat and chemicals livening up lifeless ingredients.

But doing it yourself is a whole other, much tastier kettle of fish and involves skills and knowledge that are always in danger of dying out. Before mass refrigeration and mass processing, there were many different ways of getting food obtained in abundance to keep for a longer period of time, over the winter or for travels. These traditional methods work, can mostly be applied on a small scale, and don't rely on industrial processes and huge fossil fuel consumption.

Preserving is about using food that is in season and keeping it for times it's not – rather than flying 'fresh' produce in from around the world whenever we take the fancy. It's also another step in overcoming the alienation we experience in our modern relationships with what we eat.

Why food spoils

Since it's organic matter, foods deteriorates naturally, as the naturally occurring enzymes get to work, yeasts grow and cause fermentation, or bacteria proliferate that can cause infections. Exposure to air and the fungi in it causes mould. So you can exclude either air or moisture, make it cold or alter the pH levels to create an environment in which these processes are inhibited.

Preserving methods

Drying is probably the oldest method of keeping foods, i.e. removing the water from a product in slow heat or in the sun. It also 'concentrates' the flavour, and over



Grow yer own!

PRESERVING

By: Isy & Mike - katchoo63@googlemail.com Illustration: Marc Ellerby - www.marcellerby.com

time many methods of drying have been developed including adding flavour while drying or smoking over a seasoned fire. Smoking also has the added bonus of deterring insects. You can try it yourself with apple rings or pitted plums in an oven on the lowest setting or in residual heat. Another easy thing you can try is hanging up bunches of herbs, chillis or mushrooms.

Both **salt and sugar** are preservatives that prevent the growth of harmful bacteria. Salt dehydrates as well (In fact, it was heavily used in mummification in ancient Egypt!). Both have been so useful throughout time that they have always been considered valuable commodities that have literally influenced the course of history. The rise of colonialism and the slave trade is directly linked to sugar consumption.

Vinegar creates an acid environment in which bacteria can't live. Vinegar is made from grapes, from wheat or other grains or from fruit depending on what grows in a given area.

Oils and fat work as preservatives by excluding the air. You can also exclude air by canning/bottling and vacuum packing.

Fermentation is caused by microorganisms such as yeast that transform the food. Wine and sauerkraut are examples of fermented foods.

Sterilising jars

Using properly sterilised jars is really important when making preserves. Place clean jars without their lids in boiling water for 10 minutes, or bake at 160 degrees/Gas Mark 2 for 10-30 minutes. Pick them out with gloves or tongs. After sterilising, be careful not to touch the insides or the rim with your hands, and either cool before use, or fill with hot jam/pickle/chutney to prevent cracking.

Chutney

Chutneys are combinations of fruit, vegetables and spices slowly cooked

together and preserved with vinegar, and are great to have on hand for sandwiches or pies. Combinations you might like to try include apple and sultana, pumpkin and cinnamon, courgette and mustard seeds. Whereas you want to use only undamaged fruit and veg for pickles, you can be less fussy with chutneys.

Basic steps:

1. Clean and finely chop your fruit/ vegetables. Basic chutney ingredients usually include some onion, apples, raisins and maybe tomatoes.
2. Cook all the ingredients together in a large heavy bottomed pan, preferably not iron, aluminium or copper, adding salt, sugar, vinegar and spices. Use 20g salt, 400g sugar, 500ml-1 litre vinegar for every 4kg of main vegetables. Stir frequently as the sugar can tend to stick to the bottom of the pan.
3. Simmer until tender, uncovered, anything from 30 minutes to 3 hours, until the liquid has evaporated and it's thick.
4. Pack while still very hot into sterilised jars, and screw the lids on tight. The lids should also either be plastic coated or covered with wax paper to prevent corrosion. You will probably then want to leave them to mature for up to a few months. They will keep for a year at least in a cool, dry and dark place.

Greenhoe chutney

This is the best chutney ever. It was in an old cookbook that the old lady who lived in my family house (Greenhoe) before us wrote. My Dad made it every year (his tomatoes never used to ripen). It has a lot more subtlety of flavour due to the ginger and mustard than your average chutney. Nowadays my Dad grows the most amazing ripe tomatoes and has to pick them green especially for this!

1. Wash and slice 1.8kg green tomatoes and 900g apples. Shred 6 dried chillis with scissors (or use 10g chilli powder), and peel and mince 110g onion or 55g garlic.

- Chop 110g preserved ginger.
2. Bring everything along with 55g crushed yellow mustard seed, 110g salt, 900g demerara or brown sugar, 450g sultanas and 1.7 litres malt vinegar to the boil in a heavy bottomed pan, stirring well. Cook for about 1 hour, until brown and soft.
3. Pack into sterilised jars, then leave for a couple of months for the flavours to fully develop.

Marmalade

1. Put 8 whole seville oranges and 2 lemons into a pan and cover with water. Simmer for 2 ½ hours.
2. Remove the fruit, keeping the liquid. Halve the fruit and scoop out the insides pith and pips etc. Put the insides in a pan with a little of the liquid from before and simmer for about 10 mins (to get the pectin out).
3. Meanwhile chop the orange (not lemon) peel into the size pieces you want in the final marmalade and place it in a 4 pint measure.
4. Strain the pith and pips mixture, adding the liquid to the 4pt measure. Discard the pulp.
5. Top up to 4 pints with the original simmering water (use plain water if there's not enough simmering water). Put in pan with 4lbs sugar and boil till setting point is reached (about 10 mins).
6. Maybe let stand a little while before jarring so that peel doesn't all rise to surface.

Resources

stason.org/TULARC/food/preserving/ - amazing huge resource
www.eco-action.org/teapot/anotherdinner.htm - 'Another dinner is possible - more than just a vegan cookbook' our cookbook published with a chapter all about preserving foods (apart from the marmalade one, which we somehow forgot to put in...). Available from Active Distribution.



how to MAKE A ZINE

by Kathleen Allevaccas@hotmail.com

Zines are basically homemade magazines, although fancier publications like 'Last Hours' still count. They're usually printed by photocopier (cheap, accessible & accessible) & are notoriously unprofitable. As you might expect from a non-mainstream medium, zines are often concerned with non-mainstream subjects, such as punk music, radical politics and so on. In my opinion, the best things about zines is the accessibility of the medium - it is so easy to publish a zine that anyone can do it, leading to some amazing, inspiring and unexpected zines that piss all over 'heat'.



So, first off you need to decide on the content of your zine. Some zines focus on one subject, like vegan recipes, band interviews or travel stories, while others are full of whatever is in the writer's head - fiction, stories, researched articles, recipes, comic strips and so on. Some zines are all text, others are all drawings but most are a mixture of both. Have a read of some zines and work out what makes the good ones good and the bad ones bad. Now get the writing the test of your zine- don't be afraid to get someone to check it for spelling and grammar because it'll make it much more readable (although probably less punk).



Now then, the simplest way to lay out the pages for your zine is to 'cut & paste' - basically just sticking text and pictures onto the page where you want them - bypassing computers and desktop publishing w/ all that. In the example on the right, this makes it easy to fit text around pictures & make the page look exactly how you want. A couple of things worth thinking about when laying out your pages are legibility (typewritten or computer text is easier to read than most people's handwriting, but make sure you use a clear font and don't make text too small.) and photocopability (to - to make sure your page will photocopy well, leave a 1cm margin around the edge of your page as copiers will often cut this off. Also, text that is black on white, or white on black copies much better than grey on grey. Also, Biro and pencil tend to copy badly, stick to black felt tips and proper outlining pens (they're easy to stick, no excuses).





like this.

see?

You can draw the artwork for your zine, but I like to use pictures nicked from other places as well, mostly newspaper weekend supplements, books from skips & shit I find left on trains. It's useful to keep a file of pictures so you can keep them vaguely ordered. Both these pictures are out of a newspaper supplement. The one on the left could be enlarged and used as a background, with text pasted over it, the one on the right could do with a speech bubble,

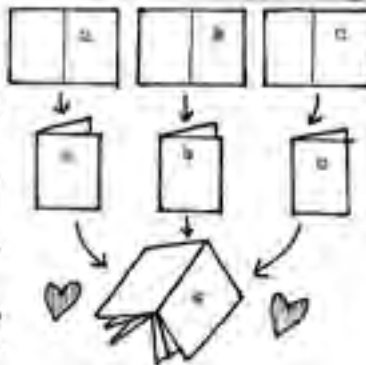


Before you copy yr zine, stick each page to a sheet as it needs to be copied - the drawing on the right shows where each page needs to be to make up a 12 page zine.

When copying, keep organised! If you make 100 copies of a 28 page zine, you'll have 700 bits of paper floating around so take files to put all the copies of each page in. There's lots of fancy stuff you can do with photocopyers so have a play around.



Scissors are near essential when copying, to keep costs down. Friends with access to copiers are invaluable, or you can use any large office supplies shop which trusts you to tell them how many copies you've made (email if you want specifics). Make as many copies as you think you can get rid of, but remember that you can always print more later. I usually print about 200, but I made 20 copies of my first zine & still had left over.



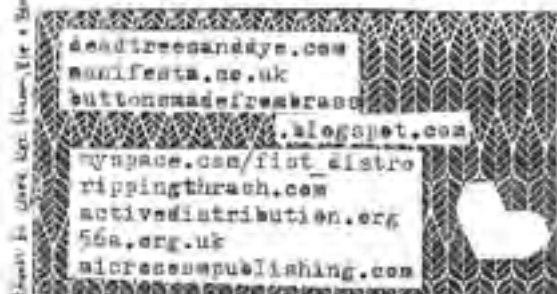
Now you need to fold your pages and collate them (put them in order). This can take ages so get some friends to come round and help. If you need to cut pages, it's worth borrowing a guillotine to make it neat. Make a pile of each page (folded), then take one from each pile to collate each copy. A long arm stapler is superuseful to staple each copy but if you don't have one, use a normal sized stapler to staple into the corner, then bend the staple in with a spoon (see the drawing).



Now you've made yourself a fancy zine, you need to get it out there to your adoring audience. There are a few ways to do this - swap with other zine writers (by post or in person at events like the London Zine Symposium), sell/give away at gigs or get distros. 'Distros' are DIY zine distributors that will buy zines off you for a wholesale price and then sell, along with lots of other zines and often stuff like badges, patches and books. Most distros have websites, so check out their submission policy & post them a copy.

I could write much, much more about zines but there's no space so take this as a basic how-to & email me if you want to talk about zines.

As a starter, here are some distros, and you should definitely come to the Zine Symposium this April, xx.



F L Y P O S T I N G

Words & illustration by: Isy - katchoo63@googlemail.com

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The invention of the photocopier as a tool for bureaucrats and businessmen, facilitating the cheap, swift and accurate reproduction of documents doesn't immediately conjure up the prospect of a powerful tool for subversion. Office workers everywhere are now using it as the ultimate in shitwork. The machine makes weird smells, annoying noises and using it usually gets dumped into the thrill packed life of the kid on the training scheme along with making the tea and tidying up. The photocopy's status as a cultural artefact, as art, doesn't get much more glamorous. The quality is harsh, the paper's frail and after a while even this deteriorates. Instead of preciousness and collectability the photocopy remains steadfastly valueless and disposable. It is exactly these qualities which make the photocopier a useful medium. //

Flyposter Frenzy, *Photocopiers*
-interplanetary saviours from another
dimension?

Street art is what inspired people who have something to say or share decorate our drab and dull cities with, usually off their own backs and without any endorsement from society and government. The techniques range from graffiti to subvertising (defacing billboards), stickers, projections and flyposting.

a flyposting guide!

Go paste in places you've seen posters up before... they'll be more likely to stay up there... Go at a quiet time... Go in twos or threes...

Poster images should be bold and simple. If you want to include more writing, put 'em where people hang around...

'LOOKOUT'

OH BUT I GOTTA FINISH READING.

Mix up some wallpaper paste, or make your own

☆wheatpaste☆

MIX 3 TABLESPOONS FLOUR WITH COLD WATER TO MAKE A PASTE, THEN POUR THIS SLOWLY INTO A PAN WITH 1 CUP (240 ML) HOT WATER, STIRRING WELL. BOIL, THEN COOL. YOU CAN ALSO ADD A TABLESPOON OF SUGAR WHEN IT'S THICKENED.

take it with you in a bucket or in a plastic bag, and take a wide paintbrush or sponge

KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR CCTV...

AND THE COPS! KNOW YOUR RIGHTS.

find a smooth, dry surface, splash on yer paste then spread the poster over. Give it another coating of paste to smooth it down.

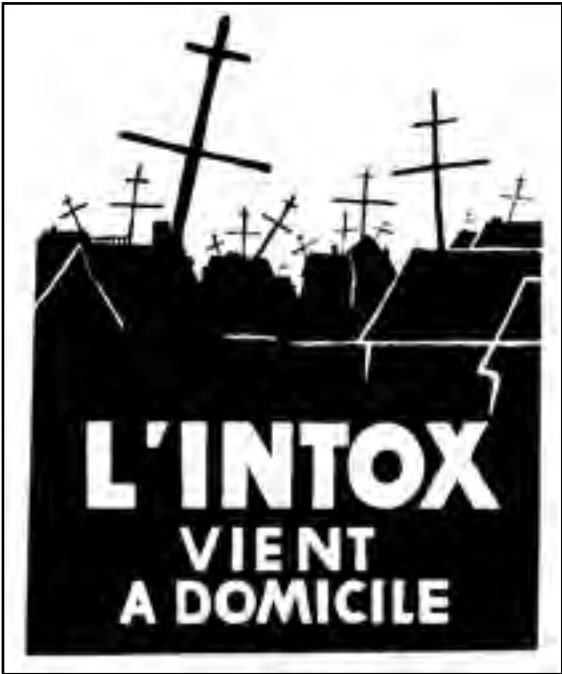
OK, THIS FEELS LIKE ELEPHANT SPERM... EW!

CMON IT'S FOR THE REVOLUTION! OH AND YOU COULD WEAR RUBBER GLOVES.

DON'T POST OVER OTHER POSTERS!

UNLESS IT'S DOGGY NAZI SHIT.

disclaimer:
don't do illegal stuff cos it's bad



Various examples of flyposters through the years. [Top left] Using bill posters to subvertise a McDonalds advert (by Dr. D - London); [top right] Anti-Iraq posters (Eko - France); [above] 'I want Out' an anti-Vietnam poster (Committee to Help Unsell the War 1971); [top middle] artwork on the street (D-Face - London); [above left] A poster from France in 1968; [above] An illustration from 1835 showing billposters on Cheapside in London; [Left] Anarchists examine revolutionary CNT posters in Madrid, Spain in 1936

“Narrate for us in your vivid style or in your fervent pictures the titanic struggle of the masses against their oppressors; inflame young hearts with the beautiful breath of revolution. ”

- Peter Kropotkin: Paroles d'un Revolte

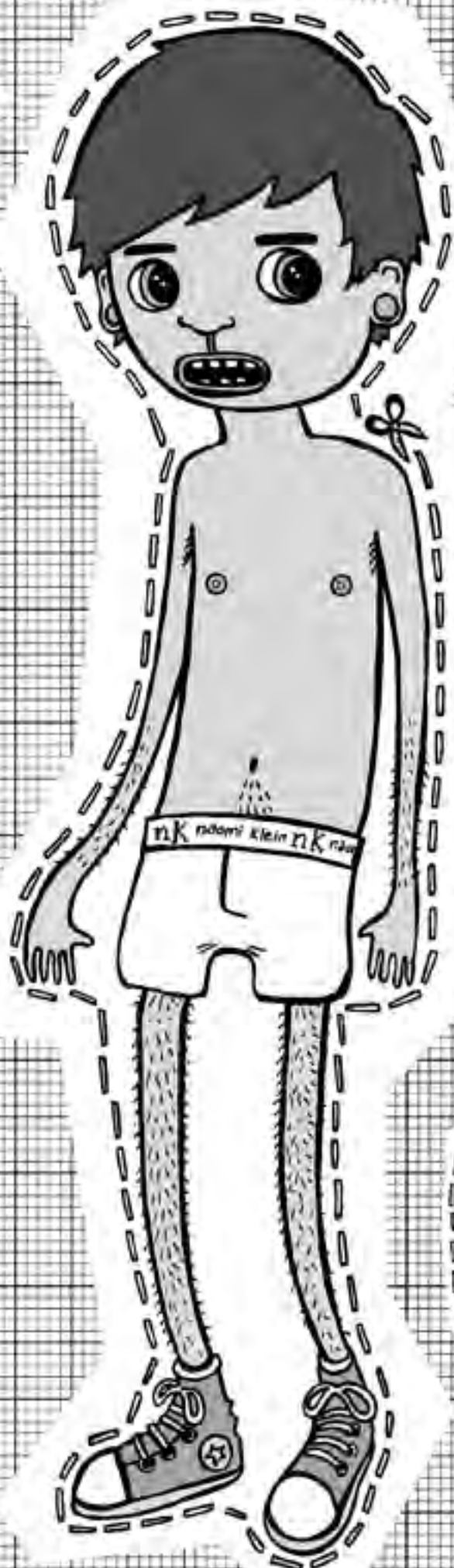
Of all these, flyposting must be one of the easiest. There is no skill required, and all you need is a photocopier and some paste. And a certain degree of stealth, as it's illegal in most countries, at least if done on any private property. It's also called wheatpasting, or bill posting – an even older name is bill stickering, from when it was used widely in the 19th century to advertise circuses, theatres or nightclubs.

Most flyposting is now done by smaller businesses advertising things such as gigs or club nights (though big business has been known to subcontract illegal flyposting too), but it's of course always been a chosen medium for political activists, an un-mediated way of creating a presence on the street and getting messages across. When most media is in the hands of corporations who obviously have an interest in maintaining the status quo, and when what we see and hear on the news is therefore limited, street posters can also be a vital source of information and communication for people and have fulfilled this role throughout history. An early but not very libertarian example would be Martin Luther nailing his 95 theses to a church door in 1517, said to have sparked the Protestant Reformation. After the French Revolution, the lyrics of revolutionary chansons were flyposted on the walls of Paris. During the Russian revolution the anarchist Makhnovist army would put up posters in liberated villages declaring them free to choose their own organisation. And beautiful clear placards decorated revolutionary cities in Spain 1936-39, to encourage people to get organised, and to fight fascism. Flyposting is a fine libertarian tradition that displays a healthy disregard for private property and at the same time a sense of creativity and joy.

It's had an ambivalent relationship with 'the establishment'; guerilla art/flyposting may be unofficially – at times even officially – acknowledged as a part of a city's identity and culture, e.g. Beautiful Angle, a street poster group who make sets of letterpress posters then go out illegally wheatpasting in Washington in the US have had major exhibitions and been awarded local arts awards. Other times it is hated with a vengeance, cleaned and scrubbed off obsessively with millions of pounds being spent on these clean ups, and heavily prosecuted and repressed.

Flyposting is a type of direct communication that, as with so many things, seems to have been affected by the rise of the internet. Ah, I remember the days when we would go out at night to flypost public meetings, demonstrations, actions, calls to solidarity – now we sit comfortably in front of our computer screens putting up post after post on forums, websites and email lists instead... But we probably have also lost something – not just the sense of illegality and adventure but also confronting the public, our local communities with our existence and our messages? 🗣️

*There's a number of books about flyposting, and websites too. An upcoming book that sounds exciting though is *Reproduce & Revolt* (edited by Josh MacPhee, who's interviewed on page 40 of this issue, and Favianna Rodriguez). It's a collection of over 500 copyleft political graphics. It's been published by Soft Skull Press*



FROM REBEL YELL! to REBEL SELL:

Countercultural commodification & the dissenter's new clothes.

"Everyone is rebelling against mass society and consumerism. Everyone is a rebel, yet nothing has changed." Chris Lever explores how our counterculture is now propping up the sales counter, and ways to stop it being used as just another marketing gimmick.

Article by: Chris Lever - www.confinedtothelibrary.info Illustrations by: Freya Harrison - <http://freayargh.blogspot.com>

"Beware of all enterprises that require new clothes."
~ Henry David Thoreau

This is a tale of how our counterculture is rapidly finding its way to the sales counter, and of how our desire to rebel has caught the attention of marketing mavens keen to co-opt our tactics. After exploring some examples of corporate enterprises striving to offer dissenters 'new clothes,' we come to a question of utmost importance to our ongoing struggle against pervasive marketing practices; namely, how are we to effectively resist their influence, and rhetorical tropes, if the system is always looking to piggyback on such resistance? As Foucault, a postmodern French philosopher, persistently informs us, power and resistance are inseparable; you cannot have one without the other. Rebellion as a form of resistance is relatively straightforward when power relations manifest themselves through conformity. For example: during the Tokugawa period, when the Japanese Emperor banned the wearing of fine and colourful clothes, the population resisted by wearing plain kimonos with brightly coloured silk linings, or with full-body irezumi tattoos, designed not to extend beyond the parameters of their attire. Yet, how are we to effectively resist newer marketing practices that rely on less obvious power relations? What are we to do when resistance reformulates power, fracturing the Emperor's new clothes into a multitude of rebel-centric enterprises?

Georg Hegel, an 18th century philosopher, might have inadvertently brought about the tidal wave of postmodern marketing practices, that is currently 'breaking' over our counterculture when he asserted that we construct our own unique identities through the property we own. Following one of the biggest judicial fuck-ups to date – namely, the granting of legal personage to U.S. corporations, through a cunning contortion of the U.S. Constitution's 14th Amendment ^[1] – it seemed somewhat inevitable that big business would eventually seek to pass itself off as one of us; *vis a vis*, person to person. Whilst it was once noted that corporations-as-legal-persons 'have no soul to save and no body to incarcerate,' we are now told that 'businesses have souls,' which, as Deleuze, a contemporary of Foucault, contends, 'is surely the most terrifying news in the world.'

Corporations are constantly re-inventing themselves. There was a time when they were relatively content to pass themselves off as 'families,' in a drive to push homogeneous, familial products. When many of us think of consumerism the nuclear American family with its black Ford-mobile, cookie-cutter mod-cons, and uniform white picket fences, is never far from mind. This nostalgic perspective, however, promulgates a myth that consumerism is primarily concerned with conformity, which is of course, the *raison d'être* of rebellion. This 'myth', as Joseph Heath & Andrew Potter (authors of the book *Rebel Sell: How The Counter Culture Became Consumer Culture*) contest, can be illustrated by Pink Floyd's film *The Wall* 'where the whole system is dedicated towards creating kids in uniforms.' Heath & Potter's argument, unfolds like this.

Everyone is rebelling against mass society and consumerism. Everyone has seen Michael Moore's films, *The Corporation*, and *Supersize Me* (my copy was free with The Guardian) or read Naomi Klein's *No Logo* (currently retailing in most high street record franchises for a mass-produced £2.99). Everyone is a rebel, yet nothing has changed. We still live in a consumer culture. Rebellion inherently opposes conformity, yet, as we have already noted, the idea that we live under a totalising system of imposed conformity is a myth. The system doesn't need conformity. The system will sell you anything it wants. The system will sell you individuality, the system will sell you rebellion. Consumerism for Heath & Potter is about 'competitive consumption' and 'distinction', of which rebellion is one of the most powerful sources. The system therefore, never changes, because rebellion is one of the most, if not the most powerful sources of distinction. This, they contend, has been going on since the 1960s. They damn the fact that we are only starting to notice it now, as 'a pathetic reflection of our critical faculties', in the same way we are only just starting to grasp Foucault's 1976-1984 observations, which are explored below.

In this period, Foucault traced the birth of postmodern power relations – a 'massifying' power that takes a population of individuals as its target – to the idea of a Christian Pastorale, charged with simultaneously shepherding their flock, and safeguarding the state of each individual soul. With this analogy, one can easily



Whilst the first wave of consumerism may have softened us up to homogeneous creative wants, the new system is quite adept at feeding off our ethical concerns and rebellious nature.

observe how the flock as a whole and the individuality of certain sheep represent a combined target for marketing practices that seek to sell individuality to a population of consumers. No one wants to be a cog in the machine, another brick in the wall, or a sheep. Rebels want to be the black sheep of the flock, to stand out from the crowd, and to distinguish themselves from the system, yet, as Heath & Potter submit, rebellion 'is not a threat to the system: it is the system.' Simply put, our love of all things 'alternative' produces cool assets, which capitalists want desperately to add to their holdings (Harold, 2007: XX), or as Micheal Hardt & Antonio Negri put it; 'Postmodern marketing recognises the difference of each commodity and each segment of the population, fashioning its strategies accordingly' (Hardt & Negri 2000:152). This isn't Hobson's Choice (take it or leave it, but only we offer it, so we'll make you want it), or Henry Ford's choice ('any customer can have a car painted any colour that he wants so long as it is black'), but a multitude of choices that feed off distinction; like wolves in black sheep's clothing, attempting to misappropriate and/or infiltrate our counterculture, and to commodify our dissent.

*"Your new found dream is a fucking
nightmare,
And I wonder if you even know?
Are you ready to be Davey to the new
Goliath,
Taking notes at your all-ages show?
It's like the marketing department has
finally figured out
That 'the pit' can always make more
room.
I'd love to sneer at the camera for your
revolution,
But I just can't afford the fucking costume."
~ Dillinger Four*

Let's take a look at a few examples of postmodern marketing campaigns that not only thrive off rebellion as a form of distinction, but also seek to usurp the ethos of dissent, and hijack countercultural channels of communication. Clothing is of course, only part of the picture, though it does serve as a good precursor to some of the less obvious examples I wish to explore. As Billy Bragg so eloquently put it, 'The revolution is just a T-shirt away', yet – after viewing the extensive portfolio of alternative fashion styles found at www.yourscenesucks.com – one cannot help but feel that he came closer to our present reality when he sang 'wearing badges is not enough in days like these'. Whilst the first wave of consumerism may have softened us up to homogeneous creative wants, the new system is quite adept at feeding off our ethical concerns, and rebellious nature. It is by no accident that Apple's iPod is not only the sexiest bit of MP3 playing kit on the market, but the first to indirectly endorse illegal filesharing; or that Bertelsmann, one of the 'big five' record labels, bought Napster during its court case, no doubt, in pursuit of a little 'rebellious cool' of their own. Furthermore, it is of course, no coincidence that we are witnessing a huge proliferation of organic, and fairtrade produce, simultaneously lining our Anya Hindmarsh 'I Am Not A Plastic Bag[s]' and the pockets of the supermarkets.

Consider Negativland's *Dispepsi* record, an interesting album that uses remixed Pepsi and Coke advertisements, creating something entirely new by way of a fragmentary transformation of the existing work. When Pepsi's response came it was not what the group had prepared for; the company rather enjoyed the new found 'bad' publicity, which, as the adage at-

tests, is always 'good publicity'. Instead of the legal battle they were anticipating, Negativland were offered an exemplary amount of money to do to Miller Genuine Draft's back-catalogue of ads what they had just done to the soft-drink manufacturers' for free. They ultimately refused the offer, 'but to this day, continue to reel from the knowledge that their attempt at subversion struck other corporations as a great promotional play'. (Moore 2005:65).

We might also wish to recall the more recent *28 Months Later* ad campaign, where 'kids' were given stencils designed to hype up the film, cans of biodegradable spray paint, and encouraged to take to the streets, not only endorsing a form of 'safe rebellion', but 20th Century Fox's latest hit. Whilst I've been informed that Banksy denies any involvement in the production of Blur's *Think Tank* artwork, his unique countercultural style, and rebellious intentions have undoubtedly set an aesthetic benchmark for many guerrilla advertising campaigns^[2]. There are too many examples to cite, but my personal favourite remains *State of Emergency*, a Sony Playstation game in which players become anti-globalisation activists, battling the evil 'American Trade Organization' in an unnamed U.S. City. Safe dissent and virtual reality aside, is anyone else thinking of Seattle and the W.T.O?

Moving a little closer to home, it appears marketers are no longer content with the traditional communication mediums, and have begun to make inroads into the zine community. This shady undertaking was originally brought to my attention in a Punk Planet article by Anne Elizabeth Moore, describing a purportedly grass-roots campaign for *Star Wars III: Revenge*



Moore ultimately concludes: 'zines, stencils and wheatpasted posters *are* a great way to reach out to the underground. That's why we use them, here in the underground.

of the *Sith*, recounting the receipt at Punk Planet HQ of a nondescript envelope 'containing a stencilled T-shirt, several crappy, homemade stickers, some one-inch buttons, and a deliberately crumpled letter signed in crayon from Lucasfilm Ltd'. Furthermore the letter 'invites readers to a website, Grrl.com, that contains no official markers of its creation by Lucasfilm employee Bonnie Burton. That Burton is also the publisher of a zine called *Grrl* only serves to further blur the line between what is genuinely DIY and what is done for the man.' Moore ultimately concludes: 'zines, stencils and wheatpasted posters *are* a great way to reach out to the underground. That's why we use them, here in the underground. That the Star Wars promotional team felt comfortable misappropriating these methods, despite its dedication to the perpetration of generic, mainstream media, isn't surprising either: zinesters, skateboarders, and rock-poster artists alike grew up with Yoda, Darth Vader, and Leia (Moore, 2005:62)' Anyone who has ever been privileged to visit Last Hours HQ, and observed the humongous *Empire Strikes Back* poster on prominent display will no doubt, agree with such a claim.

This is just a small part of a larger whole. Lest we not forget, Rupert Murdoch's acquisition of MySpace has not only bought a huge proliferation of target and viral advertising, consumer products the opportunity to make 'friends' with their demographic, and the holy grail of target market research, but a new breed of corporate advertising. Through the employment of 'influencers,' hired to talk up brands – in the same way zinesters recommend bands to one another, or share DIY resources – peer communication has been hijacked as a more 'friendly' way to further marketing's blandishments.

LAST HOURS

I too, have been the target of a similar campaign, logging onto MySpace to find an email from an alleged *Back To The Future* fan, informing me of a cool new project to replicate the 'sneakers' Marty McFly wore in *Back To the Future II* – not only playing on my 80s cultural upbringing (and the misplaced notion that as a zinester, I am a gatekeeper of underground culture), but requesting I spread the word in my zine. Needless to say, I was somewhat sceptical of this so-called 'independent project' and with a little research, managed to track this 'wolf in black sheep's clothing' all the way to Nike HQ.

We might also wish to recall how Nike left themselves open to a new world of criticism when they chose to misappropriate Minor Threat's album artwork on their Nike Skateboarding 'Major Threat 2005 East Coast Tour.' Ultimately pulling the ad and issuing an apologetic letter halfway through the tour, the athletic shoe giant left a bewildered Ian MacKaye to declare: 'It is disheartening to us to think that Nike may be successful in using this imagery to fool kids...into thinking that the general ethos of this label, and Minor Threat in particular, could somehow be linked to Nike's mission.'

"You should never wear your best trousers when you go out to fight for freedom and liberty."
~ Henrik Ibsen

Nor should you wear your high-topped Chucks for that matter (as Edd has already attested in a previous issue of this zine, they're not very easy to run in). Aside from the fact that Converse's beloved underground icon is now owned by Nike, you may be surprised to hear that I wouldn't recommend swapping them for

a pair of Macbeth's, Vegetarian Shoes, or Adbusters' Blackspot Sneakers either? Whilst I am in no doubt that their path of resistance is to turn the system against itself, Adbusters is a paradigm example of an inappropriate form of resistance that can no longer be distinguished from the system it so vehemently rails against.

Contributing to this criticism against Adbusters, is its attempt to simultaneously deploy and escape the tropes of advertising. 'Its self-righteous outsider stance,' as Christine Harold contends 'inevitably sets it up for charges that the organisation has sold out.' As New Statesman's James Harkin wondered after an interview with Adbusters founder Kalle Lasn: 'If the *raison d'être* of Adbusters is to combat the white noise of the messaging industry, how does Lasn justify a special claim on our senses for its anti-branding propaganda? Or, to put it another way: what exactly is it that distinguishes an anti-brand from a mainstream commercial brand?' In a similar vein to its commercial counterparts, Harkin notes, Adbusters is 'beautifully produced, has created its own distinctive aesthetic and boasts a global circulation of 100,000' (Harold, 2007:54). Now boasting a magazine circulation of 150,000 (that has led to some of its original contributors landing lucrative marketing contracts with the likes of Diesel Jeans), alongside their anti-logo, rebel-conscientious, ethically-sourced Converse-alternatives, Adbusters' 'Culture Shop' also offers Kalle Lasn's revolutionary design manual *Design Anarchy*, a *Media Empowerment Kit*, and all manner of other anti-consumerist must-haves. To this end one wonders whether Adbusters are sincere in their enterprise, or merely seeking to profit from countercultural rebellion^[3]?

How are we to smash a system poised to make a quick buck off such dissent, and more specifically, how long will it be before Starbucks starts selling Zapatista coffee?



How are we then, in the face of such countercultural commodification, to pursue a path of active resistance against the truly damaging rhetorical tropes of consumerism, and how do we resist such an enterprise, without further stoking its flames? How are we to smash a system poised to make a quick buck off such dissent, and more specifically, how long will it be before Starbucks starts selling Zapatista coffee (or at least advertising in a manner that gives that impression)? Perhaps the answer lies partly in Adbusters' intentions to 'prank' or 'jam' the system – turning it against itself – though they ultimately fall short of fulfilling this promise. I have always held reservations regarding their claim to be turning the system against itself. I have always found their preachy, 'just say no' to consumerism, drugs, alcohol, smoking, etc, 'stance' to be, not a playful pranking of the system, but rather, a grotesque exercise in nay-saying that merely usurps marketing strategies to a different end. As Harkin quite rightly asserts above – in spite of its anti-consumerist thrust – it remains propaganda nonetheless.

The true ethos of sabotage is lost in their interpretation of 'brand sabotage.' We should not forget the etymology of the word sabotage stems partly from the Industrial Revolution, where it is said that powered looms could be damaged by angry or disgruntled workers throwing their wooden clogs, or 'sabots', into the machinery, effectively clogging the system. Yet, by a perverse twist of marketing fate it now appears, under Adbusters agenda, that the same outcome can be brought about by buying

the right shoes from the onset. Sticking with French etymology, we may also recall the 'sans-culottes' label attached to poorer members of the Third Estate (the lowest social strata in pre-revolutionary France), who were literally 'without knee breeches'. Often wearing full-length pantaloons instead of the chic knee-length culottes, the term came to refer to the ill-clad and ill-equipped volunteers of the Revolutionary army during the early years of the French Revolution, but, above all, to the working class radicals, who could not afford better legwear, let alone consider it necessary in their fight for freedom and liberty.

Whilst it is relatively simple to attack 'hip' ad-agencies at the behest of their corporate payrolls (such as Weiden and Kennedy, BrainReserve, and BzzAgent), how are we to resist countercultural commodification within the counterculture itself? We could, of course, choose to not consume, yet I wouldn't call such an undertaking active resistance. Should we accept Heath & Potter's 'mythic', revolutionist posture or, might we instead consider modes of resistance that are not predicated on independence from markets? (Harold, 2007:xxxi). Whilst, I feel the latter approach has been somewhat insincerely undertaken by Adbusters', the best way to turn the market system against itself has long been presented by the Situationist International tactic of *détournement* ^[4]. Whilst many believe Adbusters' attempts at 'brand subvertisement' incorporate this tactic, on a closer inspection it better resembles their theorisation of *recupertaion* (where radical ideas and images become safe and commodified). Instead of ad-parodies

that further promulgate an alternative consumerism, we might chose to pursue *détournement* in a manner that seeks to 'prank' the system, without leaving such an undertaking wide-open to corporate *recuperation*.

Whilst such an endeavour is no doubt a difficult task – take the Billboard Liberation Organisation for instance, who may have inadvertently provided ad-agencies with yet another guerrilla tactic to incorporate into their agenda – it is imperative that we attend to the creation of new 'weapons' that are impervious to misappropriation. Recognising that 'the system' feeds off rebellion and individuality as a much as conformity, is undoubtedly the best place to start. Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that for individuals to exist, everyone else has to be relatively homogeneous. In constantly striving for individuality, we create damaging consequences – like disassociation ^[5] – to which further consumption, and the satisfaction of more creative wants, is presented as our only cure. But it is through this intended outcome, that we can best observe the one glistening crack in the system rife for exploitation, namely, that the joys of a rebellious lifestyle, and of railing against the system, are not to be found in isolation, but in solidarity and community. We must also attend to redrawing the distinction between rebellion and resistance the system seeks to so heavily distort.

Finally, it is imperative, as good *Situationists*, to locate ourselves within the centre of this shit-storm. If we are not prepared to admit to our own flaws, to concede that we too are products of the system we



I consume; I have read *No Logo*; and I have seen *The Corporation*, yet I am wholly aware that in so doing, I am not railing against the system, but contributing to it.

seek to smash, our plight will be taken as seriously as Adbusters'. I am prepared to concede I am a product of late modernity whether I like it or not. I consume; I have read *No Logo*; and I have seen *The Corporation*, yet I am wholly aware that in so doing, I am not railing against the system, but contributing to it. We grew up with disassociation, media, advertising, and rebellion. We must recognise our flaws, and attend to our futures. It has not been the intention of this article to offer concrete solutions. Such an undertaking would be better pursued through active community debate, and ongoing experimentation. If this article however, helps any of us to continue reflecting on the provenance, and effectiveness of the weapons we employ, it will have ultimately served its purpose.

End Notes

1. Passed after the American Civil War to protect the life, liberty and property of 'persons' read: newly freed slaves. Between 1890 and 1910 there were 307 cases brought before the Court under the 14th Amendment, 288 of these brought by corporations, 19 by African Americans. 600,000 people were killed in pursuit of rights for 'people' yet, over the next thirty years Judges systematically applied those rights to capital and property. A corporation is not a group of people. It is, as defined by law, a legal person. This, in the same way legal shorthand for 'he', also means 'she,' allows laws applicable to people, to also apply to corporations. They are not moral persons, or even socially responsible persons. To best describe this type of person, would be to compare it to Frankenstein's monster, created, and required by law,

to put the interests of their shareholders above other, competing interests. A corporation is legally bound to put its bottom line before everything else, even the public good.

2. And has also been heavily appropriated in the video advertising Naomi Klein's new book, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. See: www.youtube.com/watch?v=keyjifZDULc

3. If we really wanted to put this question to a 'litmus test' – to test whether their anti-logo is essentially a logo in itself – it is submitted that the easiest way to do so would be to knock-up a few t-shirts with their 'blackspot' anti-logo on them, start selling them on the Internet, and see if it lights their 'legal fuse.'

4. Short for 'détournement of pre-existing aesthetic elements...The integration of past or present artistic production into a superior construction of a milieu.' (Internationale Situationiste Issue 1, June 1958). Simply put, images produced by the spectacle of pervasive advertising are altered and subverted. Rather than supporting the *status quo*, their meaning becomes changed in order to put across a more radical or oppositionist message.

5. Not in a chemical or psychological sense, but through a corporate ideal that requires 'individuals who are totally disassociated from each other, whose conception of themselves, whose sense of value, is 'how many creative wants can I satisfy?'" (Noam Chomsky in *The Corporation*)

Recommended Reading

- FRANK, T. (1997): *'Commodify Your Dissent: Salvos from the Baffler'* (W. W. Norton & Co.).
- FRANK, T. (1998): *'The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture and the Rise of Hip Consumerism'* (University of Chicago Press).
- FRANK, T. (2002): *'One Market Under God: Extreme Capitalism, Market Populism and the End of Economic Democracy'* (Vintage).
- HAROLD, C. (2007): *'OurSpace: Resisting the Corporate Control of Culture'* (University of Minnesota Press).
- HARDT, M. & NEGRI, A (2000): *'Empire'* (Harvard University Press).
- HEATH, J. & POTTER, A. (2006) *'The Rebel Sell: How the Counter Culture Became Consumer Culture'* (Capstone).
- KLEIN, N. (2000) *'No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies'* (Picador).
- MONBIOT, G. (2001) *'Captive State: The Corporate Takeover of Britain'* (Pan Books).
- MOORE, A. E. (2005): *'Black Market'* (Punk Planet #70).





THE DEVIL'S IN THE DETAIL AN OVERVIEW OF PUNK ROCK ILLUSTRATION

Article by: Welly (Artcore fanzine) Illustration by: William Exley -www.williamexley.co.uk

To buy or not to buy? That is the question. I mean, I'd never heard of the band, there were no clues on the thanks list, I was down to my last four quid, but the cover art is so good I think I might have to give in to temptation. Looking back, I did, and you know what? It was one of the best damn records I ever bought. Every self-respecting punk rocker recalls drawing their first skull. I remember thinking of it as my first piece of 'punk art'. It was a skeleton in a leather jacket with a mohican and it ended up on page two of the first issue of my zine, Artcore. Absolute rubbish. From there on in there was no stopping me, ruining many a record cover with my poor excuse for art after many not-so-subtle hints to friends, their bands, labels and other zines. If nothing else, the fact that many of my mediocre attempts at illustration ended up published is testament to the opportunities given by D.I.Y. punk rock. The power of sleeve illustration cannot be understated. An eye-catching sleeve can be the difference between finding a new listener and not, it can give the band a whole new dimension and become intrinsic to the way people relate to them. In my formative years I was inspired to pick up a pen and paper by seeing album covers by the likes of Pushead, Kerri, Rude, Ransid et al. just as watching my friends play in a band made me want to grab a microphone.

The history of punk rock sleeve illustration can be followed through the years and trends mirroring the musical changes of direction within the sub-genres that came to the fore during different periods in time. The early years of punk saw sleeve art take on the urgency of the instant art, where function almost came before form through the need to get artwork out there and make it look punk, as was perceived at the time. Some bigger bands on major labels tended to go for slicker covers that didn't really differ from the mainstream apart from the band members turning up their collar and sneering, but early D.I.Y. releases went from the most rudimentary cut 'n' paste poison-pen xeroxed-chaos to the vinyl equivalent of a penis daubed on a public toilet wall. Early punk covers tended to be more graphic in nature than illustrative, and apart from the sharp pen of John Holmstrom of pioneering Punk Magazine and many a Ramones record (see 'Road to Ruin' and 'Rocket to Russia'), it didn't really show itself until the early 80s here in the U.K., when the Oi! and brick-wall punk

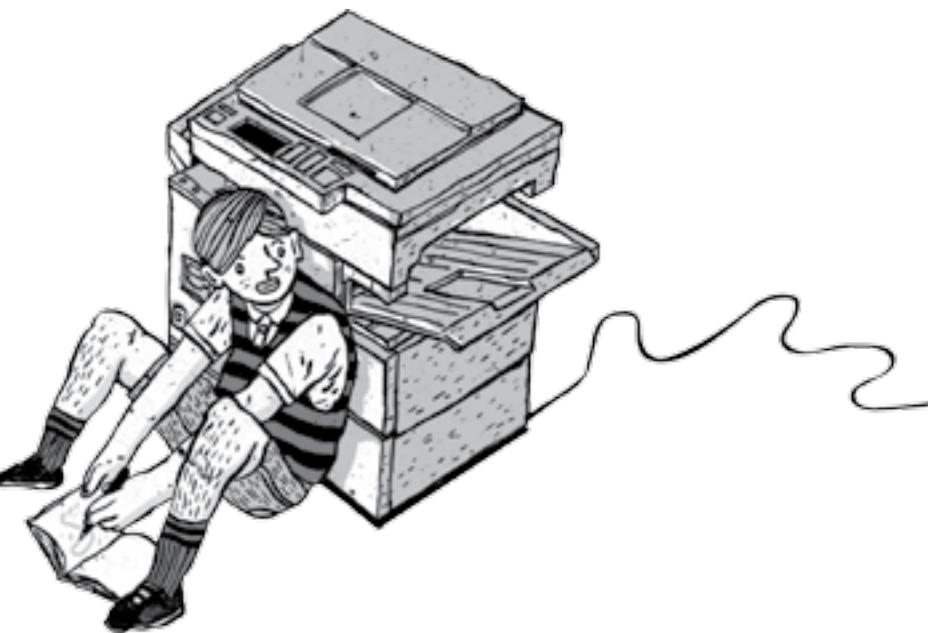
Every self-respecting punk rocker recalls drawing their first skull. I remember thinking of it as my first piece of 'punk art'. It was a skeleton in a leather jacket with a mohican and it ended up on page two of the first issue of my zine, Artcore. Absolute rubbish!



Images from top left: Gee Vaucher - (*Feeding of 5,000* - Crass); Dave King - (*Reality Asylum* - Crass); 'Dr Inadequate Phuck' - (*The Curse of Zounds* - Zounds); Nick Lant - (*The Day the Country Died* - Subhumans)

bands began drawing their own sleeves, influenced by the tattoo flash style and biker influenced art used by bands like Blitz and the Anti-Nowhere League. But it wasn't until D.I.Y. took on a whole new meaning that illustration really came to the fore in punk rock.

This of course was the Anarcho punk graphic school which arose from the house style of Crass, adopted by bands far and wide to differentiate themselves from standard punk, in what was one of the first sub-genres of the punk movement. The fine art work of Ge.Sus [Gee Vaucher] is well known, expert in its execution and razor sharp in its delivery, boxed in by the militaristic black and white framing and stencil lettering that made the band and label so instantly unmistakable. Bands who didn't have London art students in their ranks though took the stark black and white approach and experimented with things such as silhouette work. Such examples can be found on the sleeves of bands like U.K. Decay and the Amebix, aped in America by bands like Social Unrest. Bands such as Zounds issued stunning illustration with their releases, such as the 'Can't Cheat Karma' 7" poster by 'Dr. Inadequate Phuck', Icons Of Filth became globally recognised by the incredible tech pen skills of Squealer, and Anthrax by 'the Tasty M'. Rudimentary Peni's particular musical nightmare was more than adequately augmented by the dark scribbles of frontman Nick Blinko. Nick Lant's great pen work for the Subhumans helped give them definable imagery, and from the same neck of the woods, Simon Gane and his cartoons for his zine Arnie, and elsewhere continued the style into the nineties, along with the cover art of Nausea vocalist Al Ternative. All in one house style, but rendering each band absolutely individual within it, the anarcho illustrative style spread globally, and its influence, whether religiously adhered to or not, can still be seen in the work of Marald (State Of Fear etc.), Leo Gonzales (Logical Nonsense) and many others. A glance at the magazine Profane Existence, who recently started up their own featured artist section, will show that anarcho style artwork is very much alive.





Images from left: Raymond Pettibon (Black Flag); Shawn Kerri (Circle Jerks); Winston Smith (Dead Kennedys); Vince Ransid (MDC)

Just as each town or city had their known band, so it seemed, it also had its own artist feverishly scrawling away to produce flyers and record sleeves.

The early 80s also brought the creative explosion of hardcore, which took the ethos of D.I.Y. and lit a flame under it with artists springing up globally, but nowhere as noticeably as in the United States. Just as each town or city had their known band, so it seemed, it also had its own artist feverishly scrawling away to produce flyers and record sleeves. Pushead came to prominence and his art came to symbolise the hardcore era for a lot of people, from his hometown of Boise, Idaho (and later San Francisco) for his band Septic Death, many flyers and countless record sleeves from 1981 on, and when his own label Pusmort began, a whole house style was solidified. Southern California was a particular hotbed of illustration, and apart for the prolific psycho sketching of Raymond Pettibon, who gave Black Flag their corporate identity, the artwork of a one Shawn Kerri stood out from the crowd. This punk girl not only penned the infamous skanking kid for the Circle Jerks, but drew some of the most memorable flyers of the era and locale. Brian Walsby came out of the Oxnard scene (later of North Carolina) to bring his more comic approach, and his 'Peanuts for the hardcore generation' festooned just about every D.I.Y. cassette compilation, the legendary Nardcore compilation LP, many band cartoons on labels and inserts. His work for 7Seconds was probably his most widely viewed. Also from Oxnard were the Hernandez brothers, Jaime and Gilbert. Gilbert's work was mainly for flyers, but before recognition for the comic Love and Rockets. Jaime's work brightened the sleeves of Dr. Know, Aggression and Stalag 13 amongst others. Out of San Diego came the amphetamine stipple approach of Mad Marc Rude, whose work can be seen on the Battalion Of Saints and Misfits covers, as well as Mystic compilation LP's and the first Offspring cover (before they changed it).

Away from California, the Mid-West had Vince Ransid, most widely known for his Multi-Death Corporations artwork for MDC. New York produced artists such as Shawn Taggart, who started out doing art for labels such as Big City zine/records on their New York showcase 'One Big Crowd' and ended up doing sleeve art for Agnostic Front and the Crumbsuckers right at the forefront of the late 80s foray into crossover with metal, and who is now doing work for fast food chains apparently. The flagging heavy metal scene of the 80s discovered new-found

inspiration in hardcore, and borrowed heavily from its musical as well as graphic approach. And when Metallica sported Misfits and SNFU shirts on their 'Garage Days' EP, specifically with Misfits art by Pushead, this signalled the interest from a whole new group of people, and the welding together of the styles to some degree. Suddenly the monsters of heavy metal were no longer airbrushed perfection, but pen and ink gore explosions. Artists like Kevin Bakos of Texas drew up the infamous 'Dealing With It' for D.R.I. And S.N.O.T.'s (Slime from the Nose Of Texas) 'Slaughterhouse' EP. R.K. Sloane and Jeff Gaither, who'd been toiling away for fanzines and comp tapes suddenly had published work for the Accused, underground compilations like 'Revenge of the Kamikaze Stegosaurus from Outer Space' and 'There's a method to our Madness'. Gaither and Sloane's work went onto feature on many more metal releases, and isn't that one of Gaither's monsters floating about on Guitar Hero III? Crossover of course, also brought much crossover into the mainstream and major labels, meaning some of the cover art went the way of the stock-art book album sleeve also.

It's pertinent to mention that many of the artists who went on to design record sleeves and sometimes notoriety started out designing flyers. Winston Smith's spoof flyers in the early San Francisco punk days soon saw him as house designer for the Dead Kennedys (although photomontage is a whole different article). Randy Biscuit Turner of Austin, Texas and the Big Boys was a feverish flyer artist, conjuring bizarre posters for local gigs that saw him end up putting together record covers. Mad George of the early New York punk band The Mad put forth a very accomplished style for many early Mad flyers and records, and K. Crowley and Womp'm both had that stipple style of drawing skinheads and cops that was emblazoned across many an early New York hardcore flyer and sleeve for bands such as The Abused. Victor Gastelum, who drew a multitude of rats in various punk settings, saw his work feature on many Sluglord and Goldenvoice promotions in the hardcore era of Southern California. Canada's Ken Brown inked out many a poster for crossover era gigs, and saw his work feature on records for Pusmort (Negative Gain). Lee Ellington's 'Testicle Head' strip for Black Market zine, Chet Xno's incredible art for Septic Death, Tesco Vee's 'Hate Police', and later more mainstream outlets,



...then of course, you have emo, mainly intent on making record covers look like they were hewn from wood, card and string, and held together by the band's tears...



Jaime Hernandez

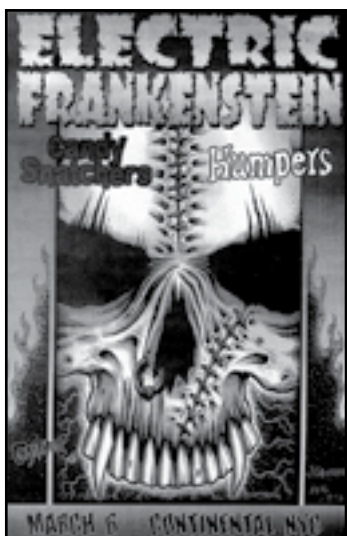
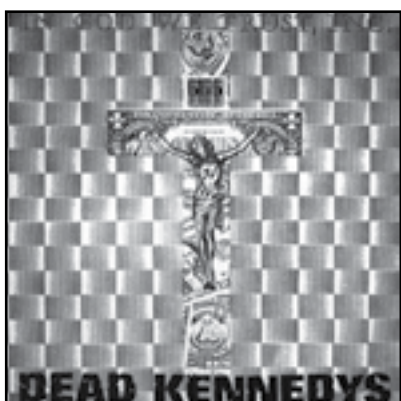
Mark Zero's brilliant piece for the Christ on Parade 'Sounds of Nature' LP, and in Europe, Italy's Stiv of TV.O.R. zine's famous art for the Wretched 'Libero...' LP, Jouni Waaarakangas of Finland's Sivullinen zine, artcore zines such as Euthanasia and Blatch, and German artist Andreas, who produced great looking flyers for touring bands like Social Unrest and sleeve art for the likes of Challenger Crew, all go towards forming a body of work that sets punk rock aside from any other form of music, in its acute focus on cover illustration.

The Grunge era saw a move again towards slicker, more photographic and ambiguous artwork in tandem with the progression of the more 'emo' style bands who preferred a more indie look, as well as occasional experimentation with more earthy styles of illustration, such as woodcut and lino print, and it wasn't until the surge of pop punk in the early 90s that saw illustration come to the fore again, with bands adopting the cartoon style of the older pop punk bands such as the the Dickies, Screeching Weasel and Sloppy Seconds. The cartoon and caricature style carried the imagery of pop punk right the way through the nineties, seeing labels like Fat Wreck casually employ their own artists like Jimbo Phillips for their own house style. After pop punk, garage rock'n'roll came a revin' and whooping, and took a look back to hotrods and monsters through the eyes of a new generation of artists such as Coop and Frank Kozik, later seeing these artists become collectible in their own right for their limited edition full colour silk-screened concert posters and other such ephemera, crossing over into mainstream rock, and even cover art for stadium rock bands. If the logical conclusion of any creative cycle though would be for pretentiousness, self-indulgence and crawling up one's own behind, then of course, you have emo, mainly intent on making

record covers look like they were hewn from wood, card and string, and held together by the band's tears; the only really illustrative style to come out of this era would be the college fine art sketch style of Derek Hess and imitators.

After the cycle was complete, recycling ensued, with a mish-mash of all styles, all popular with each sub-genre at any given time. This sees the artist's job change slightly so as to ensure the viewer knows exactly which sub-genre product they are buying, and therefore, slightly limits the free reign of the artist by the mass commerce now inherent to all styles. After the turn of the century, books started being written, and interested eyes turned backwards in time for 'new' forms of inspiration. Interest in hardcore came back from the grave for a whole new generation to mine, and unlike before, people could study the form, so as to see how history favours certain commercial approaches. And as some bands could become a self-styled band-to-end-all-bands, artists like Michael Bukowski could become, for all intents and purposes, the new Pushead, with virtual cover art omnipresence. As hardcore now again becomes largely indistinguishable from metal, the other thing to come out of the nineties hangover is a strange mix of all the influences, a new beat generation, blending pop punk, emo, hippy, you-name-it, and coming out with a more rough-round-the-edges illustrative style seen in the work of people like Jay Ryan and his art college sketchbook approach.

So there you have it, a rough look at the way things have changed. There is so much that could be written on this subject that there's a book out there waiting for someone to write, and I've only scratched the surface here. As everyone knows though, as much as things change, they always stay the same.



Images from top left (clockwise): Mike Bukowski (Palehorse); Winston Smith (Dead Kennedys); Gaither (Electric Frankenstein); Jay Ryan (Fugazi & Shellac), Gilbert Hernandez (Fear); Pushead (Misfits)

The mediums may have altered slightly, as in, where once necessity was the mother of invention, and many people like myself as young kids slaved over a hot photocopier and spent many an afternoon washing ink out of tech pens, the digital age has brought new possibilities as well as limitations. Thankfully, illustration still plays a vital role in the communication and aesthetic of punk rock of all kinds. Sure, it waxes and wanes in favour of whatever the graphic style sells more records at any given time, but hopefully, in this post-modern world of 'everything at once', there'll always be room for some hopeful kid with a pocketful of talent and a clutch of pens to have the opportunity to have their scrawlings splashed across their local friends' first seven inch or demo tape. Could this be you? You'll need some paper, a pencil, a pen and an eraser. Always start with a skull, and don't forget to stick your tongue out on the difficult bits. 🐘

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You'll need some paper, a pencil, a pen and an eraser. Always start with a skull, and don't forget to stick your tongue out on the difficult bits.



CELEBRATE PEOPLE'S HISTORY

JOSH MACPHEE & JUST SEEDS VISUAL RESISTANCE

Interview by: Edd - edd@rnzine.co.uk Illustrations by: Josh MacPhee - www.justseeds.org

Josh MacPhee is one of those people who are difficult to categorise. He's an artist, an author, a zine maker, radical, and a curator pretty much all at the same time! He established a novel distribution network called Justseeds back in 1998 with the intention of getting more radical art projects out to the public. Over the years it has grown and morphed and is currently an artists' collective known as Justseeds Visual Resistance.

He has also published a number of books, most recently *Realizing the Impossible*, which he co-edited with Erik Reuland. His book I first encountered though was *Stencil Pirates* back in 2004, which my friends and I returned to fitfully during that hot summer as we explored our city with our spraycans. I met him, almost by accident, at 2007's anarchist bookfair where he had a table hidden in the back of the hall. Early in 2008 I finally sent through some questions about Justseeds, radical art, the *Celebrate People's History* poster project he established and some of his future projects he's working on.

LH: To start from the beginning how did you get involved in creating artwork, was it something you were always interested in or something that developed? Likewise what led you to become interested in radical politics? Were you always interested in creating 'political' art or did one proceed the other?

Josh MacPhee: Both my parents are teachers, and my Dad was a high school art teacher (recently retired). I grew up around art and books, and art books! I started making art at a really early age, and just never stopped. I don't have a ton of formal training, art was never something I thought of as a career. I didn't go to art school, it's just something I've always done. At some point I realised art was the thing I enjoyed doing most in life, and I should figure out how to spend as much time as possible doing it.

As for politics, I became interested in anarchism through reading books in grade school (I remember my parents giving me Emma Goldman's *Living My Life* for my birthday once). I became more directly politically aware about the larger

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-HENRY DAVID THOREAU



JOHN BROWN
MAY 9TH 1800 - DEC 2ND 1859
CELEBRATE PEOPLES' HISTORY



"In some neighborhoods every square inch of space was covered, which I found exhilarating, but also kind of intense considering that all the messaging was directives."



world around me when the US invaded Iraq back in 1990/91, the first Gulf War. It didn't make a ton of sense, and if you interrogated the official US reasons for the war, they unravelled pretty quick.

It was at this time that I first came in contact with *World War 3 Illustrated* and *Punchline* magazines. *World War 3* is a political comic book that was started back in 1981, but in the late 80s, early 90s, they had a couple issues about the Gulf War. It was here that I was first introduced to artists like Seth Tobocman, Peter Kuper, Sue Coe and Anton Van Dalen, and more specifically to the use of stenciling for political art. *Punchline* was a zine created by John Yates, a political designer who was really involved in the California punk scene (and ran Allied Records). Each issue was a themed compilation of single pages designed, drawn or collaged mini-posters, seemingly created to be thrown on a photocopier machine and reproduced, then pasted up on the street. Both these publications opened my eyes to people struggling with what the fuck was going on in our messed up world through art, and I was hooked.

LH: Why did you choose to work with printmaking and stencils?

JM: Before starting with stencils or any traditional forms of printmaking, I was making photocopy art. In 1988 or '89 I started making weird zines with my friends. I had one friend whose parents owned a franchise of an insta-print photocopy store, and we used to spend weekends in there fucking around with the machines, blowing images up, shrinking them, piecing together pages. We'd make an issue of a zine and then run dozens of copies off, then hand them out at school. I was always attracted to the ability to make multiples, to be able to get them into the hands of lots of different people.

Stencils and silkscreening just follow from that. It's all about being able to make and distribute a thousand of something, to get as many people as possible to see it. I'm interested in spreading ideas, and we live in a mass society, so I believe in the mass production of the vehicles of ideas, whether that's in the form of street stencils, offset printed posters or photocopied magazines.

Along this same idea I'm just finishing up a new book with Favianna Rodriguez, which is a collection of 500 reproducible political graphics for activists to use. It's called *Reproduce & Revolt*, and should be out on Soft Skull Press in April. The

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graphics are from around the world, and are all Creative Commons licensed, so that activists and organisers can use them far and wide, and we can get more graphics injected into our collective radical bloodstream.

LH: What was the inspiration behind establishing Justseeds? Had you worked on any similar project before?

JM: I started Justseeds back in 1998 as a way to distribute the political art I was making, which at the time was mostly political t-shirts. I started with a small mail-order catalog (one sheet of paper, really!) that I distributed to bookstores and infoshops and such, and also sent out to friends, and slowly people started ordering stuff. I added posters and some zines, and then created a basic website, and by 2004 it had grown a little too big for my tiny apartment.

To make a long story short, some friends were running an online store, and they offered to take over filling all my orders for me, since they already had a small working warehouse set up. That allowed me to expand Justseeds to include work by other like-minded artists, and turn it into a place people could go to find all kinds of political art. This worked well for a couple years, but then my friends had some financial troubles, and had to shut down.

I couldn't take the whole thing back into my small apartment, I didn't have the space or the time, but I didn't want to shut the whole thing down either. What ended up happening was a number of the artists whose work I had been distributing were interested in turning Justseeds into a artists' cooperative. Now there are about 20 people involved in some capacity, we all have equal ownership and decision making in the operation, and we try to share all the labor as best we can. That's how the Justseeds Visual Resistance Artist's Cooperative was born!

We've now got over 200 items up on the site, as well as running a political art blog that we all post to, pulling together

a ton of information about the political end of what's going on in the world of art and culture, and the cultural end of what's going on in politics.

LH: Was the 'Celebrate People's History' poster project started at around the same time? What led you to starting the project?

JM: The People's History posters were started around the same time I started Justseeds, 1998. The CPH project came together from a whole set of impulses: First, I had just recently moved to Chicago, which is the third largest city in the US. I had never lived in a place as big before, and definitely not a place so completely covered with advertisements and public messaging. Such a big city is a target market for just about everything, so every single movie, record, fast food restaurant and big chain store has advertisements up everywhere, from giant billboards to small wheat pasted posters on boarded-up buildings. On top of that, Chicago has a thriving independent culture, so there are also tons of small bands, record labels, art galleries and clubs posting up advertisements on the street, as well as political groups and social clubs. In some neighborhoods every square inch of space was covered, which I found exhilarating, but also kind of intense considering that all the messaging was directives, attempting to tell people what to do; buy this, go here, do this. What I wanted to do with the CPH posters was to put something a little more generous out on the street, something attractive and interesting to look at that wasn't trying to get anyone to do anything other than think, there was no directive involved.

Second, some of my close friends were school teachers, and were always lamenting the lack of any materials for teachers that were about radical political history. After hours of conversation with my then roommate Liz (who is an elementary school teacher) we hit on the idea of making a poster celebrating Malcolm X's birthday. She found the Malcolm X quote, "Armed with the knowledge of our past

we can charter a course for our future. Only by knowing where we have been can we know where we are and look to where we want to go." That led to the first poster, and the quote has basically become the motto for the project.

It started with just me making posters, but after the first couple I thought it would be cool to start getting other artists involved, and I also started getting requests from artists asking if they could do posters. And that is how it has continued to grow, a nice combination of me soliciting posters from cool artists I meet, and artists getting in touch with me out of the blue and sending amazing poster mock-ups!

LH: Has CPH lived up to your hopes of what it would achieve? Do you think it's been aided or hindered by the fact it had large print runs of identical pieces (as opposed to people cutting their own stencils or creating their own paste-ups)?

JM: I'm really happy with the impact of the CPH project. So far there has been 48 different posters by 40 different artists, with a total of over 100,000 posters printed and distributed. That's a lot of posters about history! Thousands have been pasted up in over a dozen cities, and thousands of others are hanging up in people's houses and rooms for thousands of other people to see. People can and should cut their own stencils and print their own posters, the more the merrier! But I also think it is important for some art and propaganda to have as far a reach as possible. My hope is that we can change the world for the better, and to do that we need as many people as possible engaged on as many levels as possible. Not everyone is going to wake up in the morning and cut a stencil, but if someone sees a CPH poster on the street it might peek their interest in a point in history, then they look it up at work on wikipedia, and they are beginning to be engaged in the process of challenging the world we inherit, and starting to change it, rather than just accepting it as is.

LH: What are your hopes for the future of CPH?

JM: For the most part I want to just keep producing more posters, by more artists, about more diverse subjects. I'd like to work with more artists outside the US, as well as produce more posters that are bilingual, and can spread further across the globe. At some point soon I think I'd also like to produce a book about the project that chronicles the last ten years, but also

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includes a bunch of educational materials that can help teachers use the posters in classrooms. Kids definitely need to learn more alternative history, and hopefully the CPH posters can help.

LH: You recently edited *Realizing the Impossible: Art Against Authority* with Erik Reuland on the history of radical artwork. What led you to write the book?

JM: Both Erik and I were really interested in the intersection of art and anarchism, but the topic has been seriously under-explored. So we decided it would be cool to put together a book of writing and images that would be the book we wished existed on the subject, a book for people just like us who wanted to be more serious about thinking about the connections between culture and radical politics. We also wanted it to be an introduction to the subject, something anyone could pick up and get something out of, that you didn't have to be a graduate student in high theory to enjoy.

So much interesting intellectual work about art and politics is written in such specific language that is almost only used in higher educational contexts, we wanted to filter some of that out to a more general audience. At the same time we don't want to dumb down the conversation. When people organise a protest or political action, if they are smart and interested in accomplishing their goals then they spend a lot of time planning, and then also assessing the efficacy of their actions after the fact. I think we need to do the same with art. If we want to claim our art is political, then we need to spend some time thinking about what it actually does, and if there are ways we can make it better, so it can accomplish its goals more effectively. The book was intended as a beginning to those conversations.

LH: You mentioned with Erik Reuland about how anarchist ideals have driven much modern artwork. Have you any more ideas of writing about the inter-

section of anarchy and art?

JM: There's nothing exactly in the works right now, but I'm interested in continuing down this path in the future. I'm currently working with Dara Greenwald on a large scale exhibition that is a global survey of the art, culture and media of social movements from the 1960s to the present. We're really focusing in on the culture that is produced by attempts at direct democracy, and this, of course, has an immense overlap with anarchism, whether the people involved called themselves Anarchists or not.

LH: In *Realizing the Impossible* Clifford Harper says that, "Most anarchists displayed an astoundingly philistine attitude to creative work [in the past 25 years]". Have you shared similar experiences? Why do you think there's a tendency within radical culture to want art to serve utilitarian functions?

JM: Yes, there is definitely a tension there. In the past I've been told by activists and organizers that art isn't "real" political work, that it is a sideshow to the main event of actual political activity, be it meeting, protesting, union organizing, whatever. You can see this sidelining of culture in the generally horrific aesthetics of most radical political propaganda and activities. Small flyers of white paper covered with lines and lines of tiny black type, endlessly dry looking brochures and pamphlets, boring protests where we stand around and march in circles. Changing the world is going to be hard work, no doubt about it, but there is no good reason I can think of why we can't do it with a little style! Bright colors, big pictures, creative actions, let's make an activist culture people want to be a part of, not just because it is "the right thing to do," but because it makes us feel vital and alive. ☒


<http://www.justseeds.org/>

Reproduce & Revolt (edited by Josh MacPhee & Favianna Rodriguez). Its a collection of over 500 copyleft political graphics is out now through Soft Skull Press



LAURA OLDFIELD FORD & SAVAGE MESSIAH ZINE





SAVAGE MESSIAH DEMANDS THE ABOLITION OF ALL ZONES!!
DESTROY CARTESIAN RHETORIC, SMASH THE VILLE RADIEUSE,
SAVAGE MESSIAH CALLS FOR A MASS RETURN TO THE LABYRINTH!!

!VIVA SAVAGE MESSIAH!

Interview by: Edd - edd@rnzine.co.uk Illustrations by: Laura Oldfield Ford -www.savagemessiahzine.com

Laura Oldfield Ford creates Savage Messiah a London based zine full of artwork and polemics. Taking inspiration from everyday life in the city and the possibilities of what can happen when they're subverted its filled with illustrations of East London and the people who live there. The zines take us on a different journey of the city, replete with statements of intent such as my current favourite: "Savage Messiah demands the abolition of horoscopes and calls for them to be replaced by a round-up of riot stories from around the world. SMASH REACTIONARY MYSTICAL CRETINISM!!". This interview happened via email in February and March 2008.

LH: The obvious opening question: what led to you becoming interested in artwork, or was it something that you were always interested in? Likewise how did your politics develop, were you always attracted to radical politics or was it something that developed gradually?

Laura: I spent my entire childhood drawing and writing but I didn't think about having a career as an artist, it didn't relate at all to the experience I had of growing up in Yorkshire. At school the careers officer sent me to work in a stationers because I liked drawing. I thought that if I was going to have

an exciting, different kind of life I'd have to be in a band or run away with the circus or something. Later on, in the 90s things opened up in the art schools and it didn't seem exclusively for the wealthy elite.

As for my political education growing up in Yorkshire absolutely informed it, you were either with the Miners or Thatcher. When I started secondary school it was during the '84 strike and I remember being involved in a protest against the introduction of Thatcher's Youth Training Schemes, we had banners that said Young Teenage Slaves and refused to come back to classes. It was an interesting first day.

Later my politics shifted away from socialism to something more akin to Anarchism as I left home and ended up squatting in Leeds and London in the early 90s. I became involved in the Criminal Justice Bill (CJB) stuff in '94 and the early Reclaim The Streets (RTS) street parties. We used to go around the country with bands like RDF and Citizen Fish and spend a lot of time in traveller sites and service stations.

My uncle also gave me a load of Crass singles when I was 14.



LH: What impact did music have on you, did it broaden your horizons as a teenager or was it something that just played in the background? Were you influenced at all by album artwork (such as Gee Vaucher's work for Crass etc.)?

Laura: Music was fundamentally important to me, it was connected to every part of my being. I used to spend my Saturdays sifting through racks of vinyl, the sleeve art work had a huge influence on me. Much of my work has a strong graphic as opposed to painterly quality which I suspect may in part be due to that early obsession with records.

LH: How does London play a part in your work and how you've developed your art?

Laura: I drift around London in search of adventures, hidden architectures and chance encounters. It is the labyrinthine quality of the city that I try to describe in my work, those corridors, corners and staircases that instill a sense of disorientation and fascination. In making London the subject of the work I can shift easily between different temporal and spatial zones, I can talk about the memories and ghosts of the city at the same time as imagining what lies beyond the present moment, it all perpetually loops around.

LH: Do you feel like you're part of London now, or a 'Londoner'? Is there something that makes London uniquely special?

Laura: London is a part of me, it feels like an incredible affair. London is a labyrinth of possibilities.

LH: It seems that a lot of your recent work is about creating situations, or instigating events. Is it possible for art to still be a threat to the status quo?

Laura: I think that everything is subject to recuperation in a consumer society. That said I think there can be points of rupture that destabilize the norms and expectations of that society, points where one can glimpse something else beyond the seemingly endless vistas of mediocrity.

LH: It's an interesting idea, that artwork still has the power to fundamentally alter perceptions of society in that way. Are there ways to delay recuperation, what expectations are you currently most interested in subverting?

Laura: The process of recuperation is almost immediate isn't it? It isn't about delay more about creating breaks and fissures. Walter Benjamin spoke about these moments, he thought that it was only in these moments of rupture or catastrophe that anything could change

because it is only in moments of catastrophe that progress halts and there is time and space to alter things. He called these moments of catastrophe "Jetztzeiten" - now-times.

LH: From my limited vantage point it seems that over the years you've moved away from a realist painting style towards more pen and ink work. Is that accurate; and if so why have you chosen to work more with pen and ink? Is it the immediacy, ability to reproduce or a combination?

Laura: I still make paintings, but find the dynamic quality of zines very seductive. I love the promiscuity and hybridity of zine culture, I like the way you can just turn up at a pub and sell a few zines.

LH: Is this partly about making artwork more 'accessible'? Are paintings elitist (because only one individual can 'own' them)? Then again can a zine have as much of an impact as a wall sized painting?

Laura: Yes zines are accessible, they can get everywhere. A zine can have the same level of impact as a big painting, if the writing is good it can encompass everything.

LH: What attracted you to zines, have



you always created them or is it a relatively recent thing?

Laura: I've been making little books and comics since I was a child. In the 80's and 90's I knew a lot of people doing zines. Some were football ones that my brother used to bring home, others were about being punks and squatting and nicking cider. My friend Ben did a brilliant one called 'You're so hideous' which I contributed to in 1995 when I was knocking round with the Brixton punks.

LH: Do you think the internet's going to kill the zine, do you ever see yourself finishing self-publishing?

Laura: There are a lot of zines around at the moment, the resurgence of interest in self publishing seems to coincide with the emergence of blogs, Myspace etc. which is quite interesting.

LH: There's a strong autobiographical nature to your work, what is it that attracts you to this way of working?

Laura: What interests me are those heightened moments that emerge from the mundane and the overlooked. Those moments I would almost describe as epiphanies where everything seems to gel and coalesce, when you might be walking down Leyton High Road and everything seems to shimmer with hidden meanings.

Sometimes those situations might be constructed, for example when the RTS parties made you see the high street in a radically different way, but more often they are just moments where you start to read a combination of discarded objects and a vista of pylons as poetry.

I can only write about my own subjective engagement with London but there are always other voices, characters and stories filtering through.

LH: What other projects are you working on now, or planning for the future?

Laura: I am part of a collective called We Are Bad, you can see our posters in Mute magazine sometime in the near future. Watch out for us around East London. I work in a studio in Hackney and have a lot of shows coming up this year at various galleries in London and Edinburgh. 📺

There will be a new issue of Savage Messiah out in April and an event at Housmans bookshop on May 17th.

You can find out more information at:

<http://www.savagemessiahzine.com>

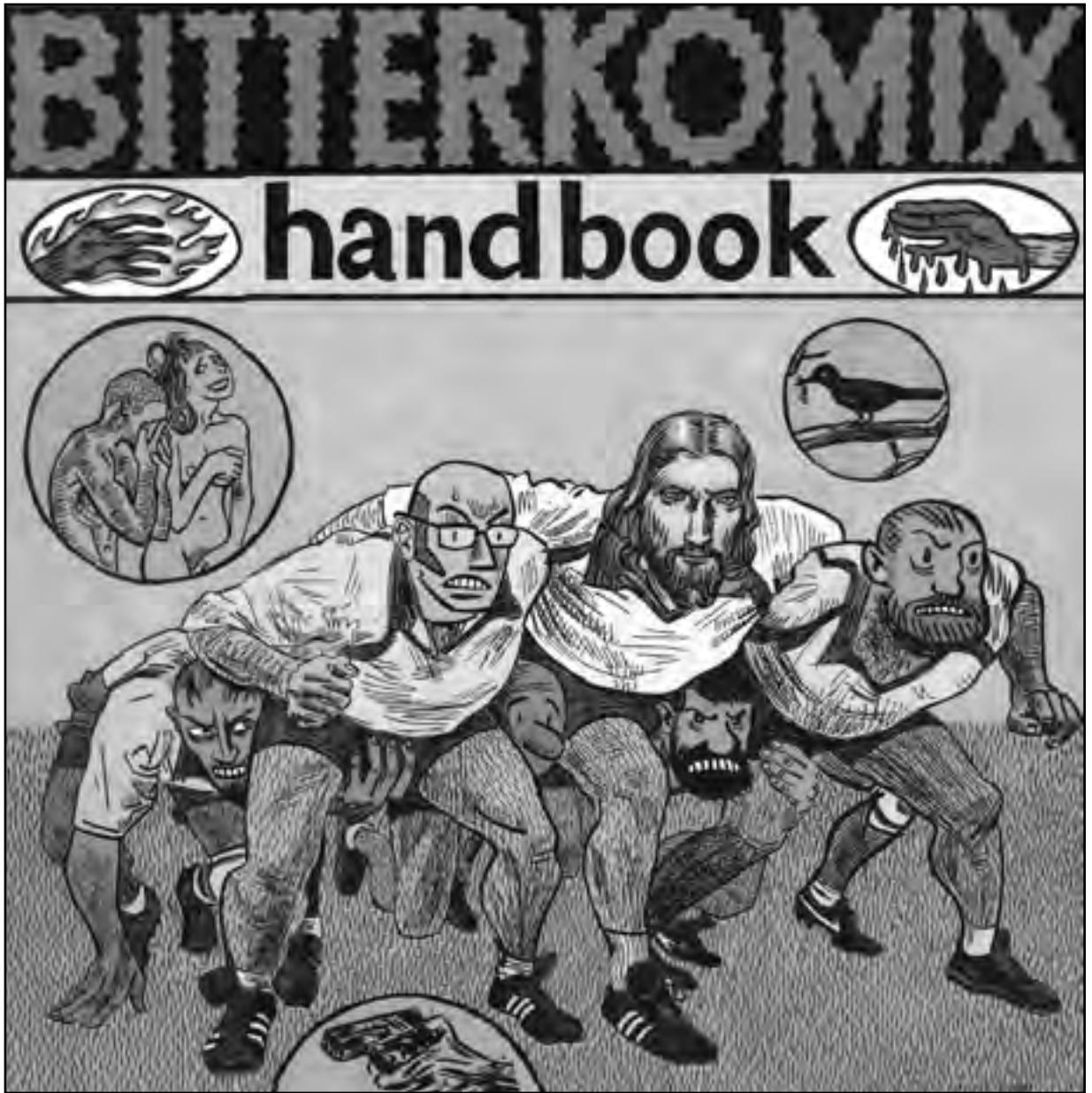
Myspace.com/barrysquiggins

Myspace.com/savagemessiahzine

Myspace.com/wearebad

<http://www.wearebad.net>

"What interests me are those heightened moments that emerge from the mundane and the overlooked."



Artwork from: The Big Bad Book of Bitterkomix (detail) Artwork by: Joe Dog (Anton Kannemeyer) Published by: Jacana

That's obscene isn't it?! The world according to: BITTERKOMIX

Interview by: Antonis Vradis - antonymous@riseup.net Illustrations by: Anton Kannemeyer and Conrad Bates

"White soldiers would go into townships to shoot at black people: Neither of us wanted to go to the army and that was what our first comic was about."

- Anton Kannemeyer

It's some day of the humid summer of 2007 in Durban, South Africa. Thirteen years have passed since the end of the Apartheid in a country that remains deeply divided and scarred, or so it seems to a naïve outsider like myself. I'm on some rant about how it would take some intelligent, subversive comics to acutely describe the country's extreme reality.

My remark sparks an animated response by my companion: There is already such a comic, I am told. Some hours of intense and exhilarating comics reading and just over one thousand miles later, I am sitting in a cafe on Cape Town's Long Street with Conrad Bates (aka Konradski) and Anton Kannemeyer (aka Joe Dog), the duo behind the Bitterkomix magazine. It's not that easy to describe the magazine's contents. At first glance, its comics seem similar to their North American and European counterparts. They are dirty, subversive, gross, funny and weird. It takes a bit longer for the realisation to sink in that these comics are also truly South African: Stories and images straight out of a fucked-up past and a fucked-up present. Perhaps their psyche is best described by what Kannemeyer had once said: "You brought me up and taught me to fear, to discriminate and hate. And now I must forgive you? No, fuck that."

LH: Can you talk about how Bitterkomix got started and how you two started working together?

A: Conrad and I met at Art School, we both studied together at an Afrikaans-speaking University in 1988 and we drew our first comic together in 1989. That comic was about conscription – we were both called up to go to the army. At that time the war with Angola wasn't so hot any more but it was the army reservists that would go into the townships; 1985-6 was the time of state of emergency in South Africa. White soldiers would go into townships to shoot at black people. Neither of us wanted to go to the army and that was what our first comic was about.

C: The first comic that we published wasn't Bitterkomix; we did a comic together and published it in an alternative magazine. We eventually started doing all the stuff that we are doing together and wanted to publish it ourselves: that is how Bitterkomix came about.

A: That was in 1992. When I started out drawing I was very keen to draw comics on adventure stories but the social and

political situation in South Africa really made us draw the kind of comics that we did. I always thought I was going to draw some adventure story but as soon as I started drawing it just turned out to be a comic or a story about South Africa and things that bothered us when we were young. The focus of the stories ended up being things dealing with our history, our schools, our religion. We were both raised Afrikaans Protestant – the Dutch Reformed Church.

C: Which is not actually our religion, it is the religion of our fathers: our religion is comics!

A: It was about what we had to face daily; as well as the school situation: It might be difficult to understand but during Apartheid there was severe segregation in schools, so we went to white schools and hardly ever saw black people. They weren't at our schools: our schools taught in Afrikaans as opposed to English language. They were a little bit like the Nazi Youth schools, because they were under strictly Christian Nationalist education. One day every week we had to put on our army uniforms and march!

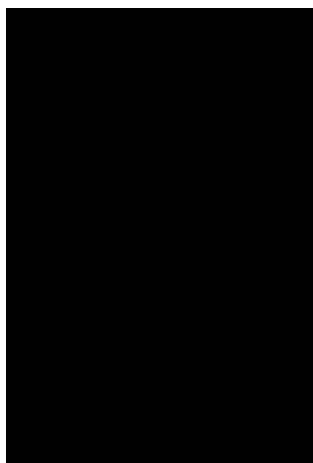
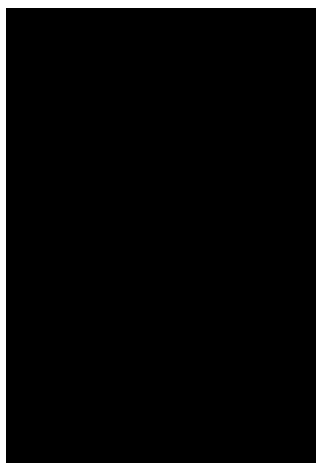
Our comics are of socio-political nature; satirical, looking at our past. This is what this book is predominantly about. There has been a shift in the magazine's context now but that is basically what Bitterkomix is.

LH: What about your influences? What kind of access did you have to European or American comics at the time?

A: My mother lived in Europe and through that we had access to French comics. So we saw Heavy Metal, some of the really interesting stuff coming out of there. And later, when I went to Berlin, when I was 18, I started reading Robert Crumb, and all the really underground stuff of America. A lot of those comics I brought back to South Africa

C: And also through our studies. When Anton's brother stayed in Berlin for example, we were introduced to the latest European comics like Jacques Tardi, Rank Xerox etc.

A: Also, you have to understand that in South Africa there was censorship up to 1994. It got less strict after 1992 but still, there was a comics shop that opened in Johannesburg and they got raided in 1992 because they had Milo Manara [an Italian erotic comic creator]. Even Love and Rockets was taken out of the shop. So censorship had a severe effect on what



“We brought in lots of English words and lots of shit, cursing words and really foul language, which deeply offends many Afrikaans speakers.”

- Anton Kannemeyer

people were exposed to, but because of this connection that I had to Europe we were able to constantly receive comics from there.

C: It was always interesting to notice that, although I think our comics were influenced by what was happening in Europe and America, the content of our comics was always specifically South African. This is what we tried to do: to use this language of new comics but to deal with issues that were relevant to our lives.

A: Also, we never thought, ‘OK, we are going to make this comic and try to sell it to middle class people’. The idea was to look critically at our own history, immediately and to let other people associate with that, from the same group that we come from. Firstly we have a lot of alternative Afrikaans young people reading it and then also English people, since the language in the comics is very accessible – it has a lot of slang and swearing, and English-speaking people from South Africa would immediately be able to follow it. So we had quite a following from both Afrikaans and English speakers, but mostly alternative crowds.

C: The comic appeals to a definite group of people. Because of its confrontational nature, it also attracts the attention of a large group of people. The people who liked it would vary; it was very unspecific. A lot of people associated it with being a highly problematic magazine, which is what we tried to do, to confront people with these issues.

That’s exactly what people identified with, since they themselves shared the belief that people should be shaken and

confronted with these issues.

A: We found it quite a comfortable space, because there was no middle of the road for people: people will either love or hate the magazine, which is nice because it stimulates debate. We had an exhibition at the University of Stellenbosch where we showed our work for an independent sex comic. Once we exhibited that work in there, so many people wrote letters saying we should be dismissed from the staff, that the university should organise a meeting between concerned people in the community and academics. Everyone talked about the issues in this comic, which I think is fantastic. You finally make something and the community is so upset that everybody talks about it. Why can’t we talk about sex openly? In South Africa, and the Afrikaans community in particular, this is highly problematic. Sex is a taboo, there is a lot of sexual misbehaviour (paedophilia etc.) swept under the carpet, never talked about, never dealt with.

LH: Maybe we can talk about the issue of dealing with Apartheid and whether black people read the comic.

C: We have had some black people who ordered the comic from us and we were very glad about it. But I did a talk in Switzerland in 1999 on Bitterkomix and I particularly looked at a sexual taboo issue and it was the first time that I actually presented Bitterkomix in front of a group of black people, all from South Africa. We were a group of people that all went to Switzerland and there, for the first time, I spoke about Bitterkomix! One of the Swiss people got up and said, ‘What do the black people from SA think about what you have just said?’ and I remember one black woman got up and said, ‘These is-

ues that we are addressing are absolutely crucial, they should be addressed in the black community too, because they are such taboo’. What’s happening now is that there are some black artists doing stories but very few that are doing stories about these kind of socio-political issues. There is a very good comic from Durban called Black Mamba, where a black guy is talking about him being HIV positive and his personal history under Apartheid. We publish a lot of women artists: in South African universities art students are mostly female; that’s why we have really good stories from women artists. Gay issues are also frequently addressed. So the magazine altogether represents the far-left, marginal groups.

A: We’ve had contributors from Europe as well, through the people we’ve met, and we translated their stories into Afrikaans. There is an ‘Indian Ocean Initiative’ through which we got some of our comics published in a magazine in Réunion [a French island in the Indian Ocean], in French, and then we got some of their comics translated and published in Afrikaans. It is a specifically Afrikaans/French language exchange.

LH: On censorship?

C: Our comic emerged just as Apartheid started collapsing. We met a lot of resistance initially and when we published our sex comic it was banned. We could not appeal because we were not notified of the ban; they said they did not notify us on time because they didn’t have our address. Still we managed to sell the magazine, people would say, ‘Hey we’ll sell it, fuck them’.

Interestingly enough we had censor-



ship from other groups: we had serious problems with printers. The first time our printer said, 'I can't publish this, it is immoral... There are women working here, we can't publish this'. And if it wasn't the printer it would be the repro house and if it wasn't that, it would be the booksellers who would refuse to sell it. That's the level to which this magazine was applying pressure; it was never easy, always attacking comfortable middle-class values.

A: But simultaneously we got very good press from within SA. Leftist newspapers would praise us. There was one incident when someone spray-painted one of my works and after that we were in Sunday newspapers, we were getting letters from people saying how much they hated us and our family without even having seen our work.

Conrad and I then started exhibiting in art spaces, galleries etc. We did something similar to what these guys did in Greece. We would have a launch of the magazine and get bands to play and the entrance would be, 'You buy a book and you can enter'.

LH: Why is Afrikaans language used in the comics?

A: We use Afrikaans language because that is where we are from, that's what we understand best but also because it is kept, here in SA, a bit like what Ocht Deutsch is in German, the 'Proper German'. Afrikaans is very much like that – so we brought in lots of English words and lots of shit, cursing words and really foul language, which deeply offends many Afrikaans speakers.

C: That basically makes our message much more important. If we were to write stories about those things in English, that would be one thing. But coming from within the Afrikaaner himself; lots of people were struck that these were actually Afrikaaners writing these stories.

A: In that discussion mentioned earlier between the university and the community there was this woman that asked, 'Why is the language so incredibly foul in the comics?' and a guy stood up, a preacher in the Army and he said, 'You know Madam you live here in Stellenbosch and everyone speaks a polite language to you but when you are out there with all these young men fighting, do you know how they speak? They speak like this'. A classic example of how everything deviant is hidden in Afrikaaner culture, that's how most things work. People pretending to be moralist. That's why we try to be confrontational for as many things as possible.

LH: What's life like under the African National Congress (ANC)?

A: Under the ANC we can do exactly what we want and nobody can censor us. This is the wonderful thing about South Africa today. We didn't really have problems with the ANC government though we have had problems with people saying our work was racist, not understanding that we deliberately used stereotypes in order to address some issues. Of course power has shifted from white to black and now there is a black abuse of power as well; only a very small proportion of black people in South Africa are getting very rich and the rest of the population might be better than before but are still in appalling conditions.

One of the biggest compliments that we've got was when people said, 'The comic is the best representation of the ten years after democracy in South Africa', because the issues addressed in it sum up the situation here. Though I suppose it is the representation of a specific group in South Africa. South Africa is a sum of many different groups.

C: Once, there was a festival of African comics in Bologna, Italy where we were invited. We were delivering a seminar to some students and one of them came up to us and said, 'Why are you saying you are African when you are actually white?' So I said, 'Well, I was born there, our fathers were born there too'. There were people in the room from Ivory Coast, Senegal, Nigeria – all living in Europe. I didn't say anything but I thought, 'this is ironic – I'm actually still living in Africa and you guys are not'. There are so many emotions coming with this question – coming from somewhere, actually being from that place.

A: For instance, in a comic where Conrad looks at the history of Bloodriver, one of the big fights between Afrikaaners and the Zulus, it's all about who are we and where we come from. We were told one story when we were at school, obviously in favour of the white Afrikaaners, and then in this comic the tables get turned, things are looked at critically from a white perspective. We are always dealing with our social and personal history. It's a very difficult position to be in and to be white, not black, but at the same time it's very important for us to deal with it. ☒

More information on Bitterkomix: joedog@sun.ac.za, Bitterkomix, Po box 564, Stellenbosch, 7599, South Africa

DaN PHLEGM

& PHLEGM COMICS

Phlegm was believed to be responsible for an apathetic and unemotional temperament in ancient Greece. Phlegm comics show the opposite is true, with incisive humour and social satire.



Interview by: Chris Lever - www.confinedtothelibrary.info Illustrations by: Dan Harrison of Phlegm comics

Since April 2005 Dan has been producing a copy of Phlegm comics every four to six months. They serve as a document of the work he's done over that period; from pen and ink illustrations to his large scale mural and graffiti artwork. Chris Lever had an email conversation with him in February and March of 2008 where they discussed inspiration, apathy, bile and what it was like to paint a bird onto an old fighter plane.

LH: Could you tell me where the name Phlegm came from? What's all this about Bodily Humours?

DP: I was reading a lot of strange books on medieval medicine at the time. People believed that the body's equilibrium was maintained by the four humours: yellow bile, black bile, blood and phlegm. I think there was a particular passage in a book called 'Born Under Saturn: a Study of the Character and Conduct of Artists' that talked about artists having an excess of phlegm causing their reflective melancholic moods. I think the word phlegm seemed to sum up what I was interested in, it appeared crude but there was more to it. I also wanted it to be a short name, like some of the cult comics I looked up to like Robert Crumb's Zap and some of the early Viz comics.

LH: Does Phlegm have an ethos?

DP: I guess I intended it to be thought provoking without being inaccessible and off-putting. I wanted something that kids could laugh at, and dads could frown at while stroking their beards.

LH: You regularly refer to yourself as a 'dumb, reclusive, artist wannabe, hippy cliché' or something along those lines. You're quite hard on yourself aren't you?

DP: I'm my own worst enemy. I feel sick looking at my own work. For some reason I have a brain that finds a way of making absolutely everything my own fault. If you were to punch me in the head I'd feel terrible for making you feel that way.

LH: It seems to me that there isn't any static medium you haven't used as a canvas. Is there anything you won't paint on?

DP: That's the fantastic thing about painting with cans, you're just not limited by the surface. I'm also an avid speleologist so I'm pretty handy with the ropes and climbing. Many of the places I paint are old derelict factories, it's amazing the ways you can use those spaces. In answer to your question: no there's nothing I won't paint on.

LH: I see you've recently painted an old fighter plane, I'm flabbergasted! How? Where? Why? Was the experience as surreal as one would imagine? Why paint a bird on it, is there a statement here, or were you trying to liberate it?

DP: I harassed airports to the point where I'm sure I'm on a string of suspect terrorist lists! I got an overwhelming reaction of 'fuck off!' Eventually I found someone who thought it would be funny to let me do it. I arranged a few sponsors for the paint (layup.com, southern playa) and that's it really. Since then I've also got permission to paint a bigger passenger plane down in Luton, but I'm saving that one for another day. It was amazing to paint and very surreal. There are another two Russian 'MiGs' next to it and one of the helicopters from M*A*S*H. The plane I painted had its wings cut off half way along, that was pretty much the only reason I painted the bird on it.

"I had hundreds of cans spread out next to me and it was midday on a busy Saturday next to a main road. A police car skidded next to me and they made me stand against the wall while they did a check on me! I couldn't stop laughing"





Plus something pretty seemed to defuse the feeling of it being a killing machine. It looked so cold and grey before I painted it. It looked like it was built out of tractor parts. It must have seen some action too. It had some fantastic cuts on its belly. Can you tell I fell in love with it? I even hugged it when I left.

LH: What's the furthest you've travelled for a canvas?

DP: Not far really, I've been lucky enough to have a lot of urban regeneration going on around Sheffield, Leeds and Rotherham. That just seems to mean knocking down interesting buildings with history and replacing them with urban living apartments that look like they are going to fall down if the wind's blowing from the wrong direction. I'd prefer to live in a city where everyone can paint on everything, kids can draw all over the pavements in chalk and people knit jumpers for lampposts just because they felt like it. I'd love it, oozing with life and character, layers of paintings and writing. Fuck all this homogenised city centre crap with its bleak characterlessness. Yuck! I travelled across to the Isle of Man to paint a big container full of skate ramps, that was a nice trip. I want to do a lot more travelling around Europe this summer and I'm thinking about going to Australia for a bit in autumn if I can afford it.

LH: Have you had any run-ins with the law to date?

DP: I tend to behave myself. I feel too much guilt to start terrorising people with my work. I may tiptoe on the line of legality but I like to put things up in little back streets and derelict places. I was painting a two story building that's three hundred foot long on a busy roundabout next to a police station and a law court last year. I had hundreds of cans spread out next to me and it was midday on a busy Saturday next to a main road. A police car skidded next to me and they made me stand against the wall while they did a check on me! I couldn't stop laughing; it felt like I was playing cops and robbers with a couple of kids.

LH: How have the native citizens of Sheffield taken to your visual adornments, dotted about the city?

DP: Really well, people have been really supportive. I've been careful not to paint too many places too fast so people don't feel like I'm taking over, and I like to leave it a while between paintings so that my work changes a little. If I was to paint everything within a few months the city would be full of the same paintings. You have to have respect and keep the walls you paint looking good. When a wall gets old or knackered I like to paint something new on it before it makes the city messy.

LH: Tell us about that joyous labour of love – and love of labour – that comes from running an independent small press.

DP: It's hard work and it grinds you down but I love it more and more every day. The longer I do it the more devoted the fans seem to get and the more support I get from the outlets. It's been hard and often very frustrating working against a system that seems to be completely unsupportive of people who want to do it this way. I still have trouble getting it across that this is what I want to do indefinitely and isn't just a platform to getting published 'properly,' whatever the hell that means.

LH: You've done countless illustrations for zines (Shadowplay, Lipgloss, Adventures in Menstruation), and bands – have you done anything new in this area recently?

DP: I'm always doing zine pages for people. I love the buzz of seeing things printed alongside other people's enthusiastic projects and ideas. I've slowed down working for bands, I don't find it as rewarding as doing a page for someone's zine. I've done a few albums that are floating about in HMV, and I did the ink drawings for an animated music video. I only like working for bands who are really going for it, there's too many crappy bands that get bored as soon as they realise the whole world isn't going to drop to their knees and start worshipping them as soon as they play.



"I get treated like a vandal for painting pretty pictures of birds and trees that I don't even sign, while every square inch of the world is covered in billboards invading and casually manipulating our thoughts".

LH: Tell us a little about 'the fine art machine' – do you still hold the same views you held in issue #1?

DP: I still hold the same views on any art institution. I think too many people are pushed on the courses like sheep and the few people who really want to be there suffer for it. I learnt a lot of great things and had some great seminars by other artists. I also had to be taught by spiritless teachers who gave up years ago who just bash out the same 'in fashion' art theories term after term. If you do want to study you also have to work against the current of thousands of beer swilling students who talk about ideas instead of actually doing them.

LH: What art theories were 'in fashion' when you did your time?

DP: Anything to do with video installation and they were happy, and by the looks of what's coming out of universities these days it's just the same now. What irritated me more was the fact that some of the teachers peppered conversations with buzzwords instead of really trying to talk to you. Maybe I was too thick to understand, I am a cartoonist after all. I'm glad I did a fine art course though, I think an illustration course would have brainwashed me.

LH: Where did the inspiration for 'The Political Blob' in issue #2 come from?

DP: I did it a few months after I'd been down to London for the anti-war march. That feeling of unity and action from millions was the best feeling I'd had in years. To have it completely dashed left me feeling like I live in nothing short of a fascist dictatorship. That page is a carbon-copy of the fifties film 'The Blob.' I just felt there was such a gulf between the government and people and such a state of complete

distrust that they were all part of one autonomous blob.

LH: Your first issue opens with the quote: "If you don't like the look of this magazine let me try and ease your dissatisfaction with the knowledge that the front cover is recycled from hundreds of copies of Sun newspapers, so at least it can't be quite as crap as it was before." Tell us about your sense of humour. What do you find funny?

DP: I take my own sense of humour with a pinch of salt. I spend a lot of time on my own fermenting ideas and being cynical. I like Bill Hicks, and Charlie Brooker, people who have a real vitriolic way but are only trying to stand against something that threatens positive progress. I also love playful writers like Douglas Adams and Joseph Heller.

LH: Tell us about Coot's current situation in the institution? You have a lot of re-occurring characters in your Comic (Crazy Coot, Mouth, The Zappy Kids, Cartoon Guy, and The Thing). Given the hiatus of issue #6, do any of those characters make a reappearance in issue #7? Are there any characters you are thinking of doing away with for good?

DP: I need a break from writing characters. In the latest issue I've replaced all characters with the same basic character I use in my murals. I did this so that I could spend some time working on the composition of the pages and how I want them to flow. I can imagine doing a full Coot story that takes up a whole comic but all the others are gone for good I think. I wasn't getting enough from short sketches. I'm going to do a few more single page comics for a few more issues and then do a whole issue of Phlegm as one story. I don't want to

cling to anything yet. People seem to want things to last, but I don't want to commit to any yet. Those characters in issue #1 were literally the first cartoons I had ever drawn so there's a lot of things about them I don't like now. I think the future will bring the characters back but in a slightly different form.

LH: It's good to hear Coot still has a future. What degree of separation would you attribute to Coot's 'comic' and Coot's own drawings, given that you juxtapose the two in each issue they have appeared in? Do you approach both with the same mindset?

DP: To be honest I loved drawing the Coot pages up until issue #3 when I found David Shrigley. After that I found myself trying so hard not to be like him it was all I could think about. I was thinking about doing a book of Coot's drawings for some time actually. I approach them both in the same way. A complex comic page tends to be made from a handful of Coot type sketches and a load of random illustrations sewn together and then cross-hatched for a thousand years.

LH: Do you see your comic and other creative outlets, as a 'tonic' to the constant bombardment of communication rhetoric? As a personal 'remedy' to a world gone mad?

DP: Very much so, but thankfully other people seem to feel the same so I don't need to pad the walls of my room quite yet. I get treated like a vandal for painting pretty pictures of birds and trees that I don't even sign, while every square inch of the world is covered in billboards invading and casually manipulating our thoughts. ☹

For more information on Phlegm visit: www.phlegmcomics.com/



The wonderful wizard of Northants!

ALAN MOORE

"There were miracles supposedly happening at the church that I passed at least two or three times a week to see my nan." With the recent publication in the UK of *Lost Girls* Alan Moore took the time to talk to Last Hours about imagination, sexuality and his love of a Midlands town.

Interview by: Edd - edd@rnzine.co.uk Illustrations by: Melvin Galapon - www.mynameismelvin.co.uk

Melinda Gebbie and Alan Moore spent 16 years working on their piece of pornography, a three book edition titled *Lost Girls*. A comic documenting the possible sexual liaisons of Dorothy of *The Wizard of Oz*, Wendy of *Peter Pan*, and Alice of the *Adventures in Wonderland* met in an Austrian hotel on the eve of Franz Ferdinand's assassination and the outbreak of the First World War. It's more than just pornography, it's also intensely political, celebrating the human imagination against the torment and suffering of war. But it's also political in its examination of sexual desire in a way that doesn't objectify the characters, but equally doesn't shy away from showing the inherent pleasure of human contact through fucking.

Alan Moore is one of the world's best known comic creators, having written such defining works as *V For Vendetta*, *Watchmen*, *The Extraordinary League of Gentlemen* and *From Hell*. Since 1989 though, he has also been working on *Lost Girls*, developing J.M. Barrie's Wendy Darling, Carroll's Alice and Frank Baum's Dorothy Gale into adults and what the real world they inhabit would look like. With the recent release of *Lost Girls* in the UK and EU, after a year's delay because of outstanding copyrights, it seemed a good time to talk to Alan Moore about his thoughts on *Lost Girls*: the potential controversy around the characters, the content, his own sexual boundaries and issues of magic and alchemy.

LH: Okay, the first question doesn't really relate to any of your work - I grew up in and about Daventry near Northampton, and ran away to London pretty much as soon as I could, and I just wondered what it was about Northampton that kept you there?

AM: Well, that is quite a big question. Its partly because that's where I was born. But that doesn't really make a huge case either in your case, or the case of Alan Carr, who always send the best thing about Northampton was the M1.

As I grew older I started to realise just what a fabulous, literally fabulous place, Northampton was. It's a bit like old Baghdad out of *Arabian Nights*!

There were miracles supposedly happening at the church that I passed at least two or three times a week to see my nan. Shakespeare's *King John* was set at the end of the street where I grew up in, and history was incredibly present. In my current book *Jerusalem* I talk about how in the 8th or 9th century there was a monk who was over in Golgotha in Jerusalem at the site of the alleged crucifixion and was digging around in the dirt. And he discovered what appeared to be an ancient stone cross. And he thought, 'Hmm this seems significant, who do I get in touch with?' But luckily at that point one of those helpful angels, who often appeared in the dark ages, turned up and said, 'Yeah, you should take this and place it at the centre of your land'. So he returned to England carrying this stone cross. He got half way Horseshoe street in Northampton opposite what is now a billiards hall when he thought, 'Well I wonder whether this is the place', when the angel helpfully reappeared and said, 'Absolutely, this is the spot'. So there is that, the angels and apparently god think that Northampton are quite important.

LH: In *Lost Girls*, you touched on a number of taboos. You obviously weren't worried about it, but I was wondering now that it's been out for a little while have you been interested in getting peoples reaction to the taboos that you raised?

AM: Well, I've been interested in their, largely, lack of reaction. We had some of the more transgressive, self-consciously transgressive American elements asking why we hadn't gone out of our way to be more shocking. But it's been the lack of reaction that's been more surprising than any reaction we might have anticipated.

When we were in the final stages of completing *Lost Girls* it had become obvious that we would be being published under



Above left: the sexual repression shown by Mr and Mrs Darling is highlighted with Melinda Gebbie's use of shadows. Above right: The distance between Mr and Mrs Darling is again highlighted by their simultaneous experiences in separate rooms.

a George Bush administration and in the wake of the recent paedophile hysteria that has gripped much of the West in recent years. And so we were prepared for the fact that there might have been what we call a monsterring, which is where you open your door one Monday morning and you have the assembled masses of the tabloid press shoving microphones and flashbulbs in your face. But we'd been thinking about that for 18 years. And we were both entirely satisfied that we had sorted through every conceivable moral angle and that we could defend any level of attack that we could imagine.

But then we started to get an angeling, which rather threw us off balance. If there's an exact opposite of a monsterring we got it. We got wonderful reviews that commented on the problematic sexual aspects and didn't try and sugar coat the book. There was a brilliant review in the Guardian, which has made us both completely unbearable to live with, which referred to it as a deeply moral work, which is exactly what we had hoped for. It seemed that the message of the work was getting through despite the notoriety of the subject matter.

I think that most people have understood it in context. Most of the criticisms came from people who hadn't actually read the book yet, but had heard some distorted version that made them imagine something like a seven year old Alice in

Wonderland was going to be violated by a Jabberwock or something.

LH: You were talking about the transgressive elements, and I was just wondering if there were any boundaries you weren't willing to cross [with *Lost Girls*]?

AM: Some things we just didn't feel were even potentially sexy. This has got to come down ultimately to our taste. Things like necrophilia or coprophagia or any of those more extremes we tended to keep away from, because they would have really altered the tone of what we were trying to create in *Lost Girls*. We tried to keep away from various areas, not all of them were entirely sexual; for example for the final chapter of *White Book*. We finally opted to make it as if it'd been done by that great master 'Anonymous'. It was originally going to be poetry by Baudelaire – or a pastiche of his poetry – along with illustration by Félicien Rops who did the famous 'Pornocrates'. But the thing is to make it look like Rops it needs to be very anti-religious and very anti-clerical, which we haven't got a problem with, it's just that wasn't really what *Lost Girl* was about, and it would have been a bit of a red herring – an irrelevance.

People have also mentioned that it's quite light on bondage and S&M. It just didn't seem to fit. Also there's been such a plethora of bondage imagery since the late 1980s that we felt that it might have

lost some of its kinky appeal. We were trying to explore ground perhaps a little less trodden, at least in this context.

LH: I was reading *Lost Girls* and it seems to me that the book that it most reminds me of is *V* [For Vendetta] I don't know if you agree with that...

AM: Well, if I had to compare it to another book, I think it seemed to me that it was perhaps more like *Watchmen* in its intentions. In so much as it was taking a genre that was probably moribund and unhealthy and attempting to do something new with it. To use its dimensions but do it in a different way. But I suppose in the aspect of personal transformation, possibly, is that what you were talking about?

LH: Yes, and it was about the fact you're celebrating human imagination and that being juxtaposed by the eruption of the war...

I think one of the most important things is looking back at *Lost Girls*, now that we've had a chance to finish it and get a little bit of distance between ourselves and the work, we've noticed just how important that sexual and personal transformation and re-integration becomes upon some of the re-reading. It's kind of like that with all of us to a certain to degree... When we were children when we first heard those stories for the first time we identified with the characters. They didn't grow up: we did, we went through our adolescence. Our bodies changed shapes, our thoughts and desires and motives were



I think that if most of us look back on our childhood we have this constructed vision of ourselves as angelic, stainless, little golden souls who were innocent and pure



Top: Dorothy, Wendy and Alice begin to discuss their sexual history, with Dorothy's story in the sauna. Above: a view of the 'White book' a central aspect of *Lost Girls* at the climax of events in the hotel

all completely changed. And I think that if most of us look back on our childhood we have this constructed vision of ourselves as angelic, stainless, little golden souls who were innocent and pure, and used to watch Stingray on television. And then adolescence, puberty, they soiled us. They made us embarrassed and self-conscious and shamed. And I think inside a lot of people, there is that feeling that they're a completely different constructed person to the real them that existed until they were ten or 11, and they feel they've lost the boy or girl that's inside them. I think that's completely unnecessary. In *Lost Girls*, we're saying that that idea of separation is illusory. You can never be separated except by your actions; believing that that's the case. For me the most important panel in the whole book is that one in the penultimate episode where they're having sex in front of Alice's beautiful looking glass, and there's a sort of obvious sexual pun on the phrase, 'We're coming together.' But it's talking about that moment of re-integration; that there is no need to think that any part of us is severed or lost. Especially by a thing like sex. It's so completely ordinary and natural. Every organism does it. But we seem to have attached so much guilt and shame and negative importance to it that we seem to get ourselves into all sorts of psychological knots, which was one of the reasons that we did *Lost Girls*.

LH: Do you think in terms of sexuality being taboo it's because of the fact that it still mostly happens in our own
LAST HOURS

private sphere making it more difficult for people to talk about, or is it more than that?

AM: Well if any of us have been involved in any violence, that's not usually a big public thing. It's usually in a back alley or a living room or whatever. And yet we don't seem to be so embarrassed about talking about violence. Most of us, if we're going to be operated upon, or we're suffering from some serious illness that's a very intimate, personal thing; and yet we lap up ER. So it does seem that sex, for some reason, is put into a special category all on its own where different rules are applied to sexual material than would be applied to any other form of material.

I've mentioned several times during the course of talking about *Lost Girls* that although there have been questions about the sex between minors in *Lost Girls*, they have sort of implied that we were inciting paedophilia. That paedophiles might be going out and spending all this money for a beautifully produced art book, which actually has very mild material, in comparison to what they would be used to presumably. But the thing is that during the course of writing *From Hell*, I was never asked whether I was inciting people to disembowel East End prostitutes. I know that's a bit flip-pant but I think the point still stands. We do put sex in a special category, and I'm not entirely sure why but I tend to blame everything on monotheism.

It tends to go back to the early church I think. If you look at some of the decoration of the early churches there used to be a lot of overtly sexual material in them because it was an assured crowd puller. So you could have these pictures on the wall and say, 'Here's two wicked people performing an act that if you were to perform you would surely go to hell for'. Even if you were to become aroused by it you were committing a sin. So it's brilliant; you've got people being given pornography but also being given the message that if they're decent people they'll feel ashamed for having even looked at it. And I think that's the beginning of this perhaps even lethal catch 22 begins.

We are bombarded with sexual imagery, at the same time we are told that we are subhumans if we in any way aroused by it. That was a kind of short circuit that we were trying to break with the *Lost Girls*. We were wanting to do a piece of pornography that even in the most high minded Guardian reader could not initiate feelings of guilt or shame, or think of themselves in any way unworthy for buying or reading this material.

Despite all the church's attempts, we are obviously allowed to run riot in our imagination if we see fit. You cannot police the imagination. You cannot police desire. All you can do is give people ultimately destructive complexes about the way in which their imagination tends. It won't stop them imagining



Above: Melinda Gebbie's graphical realisation of Dorothy's hurricane experience before landing upon the Yellow Brick road.

There's something very exhilarating taking a character like Alice and thinking it through. Thinking, 'Alright, what might this child have grown up to be?'



those things, it will just make them feel progressively more horrible about them, and themselves. And ultimately with some people it might lead them in to a very dark and furtive corner where they're very isolated and what might have originally been completely harmless flights of fancy might tip over into something that is more unpleasant or dangerous. Well that's my theory anyway.

LH: What were your feelings on taking other people's characters and developing them because it's something that you've done quite a lot in your work?

AM: It is. Though *Lost Girls* was the first time I'd ever done it in quite this way. We started *Lost Girls* in 1989, and prior to that I had been given ongoing comic characters on the understanding that I would revive flagging sales or would redesign the character and make it work. But the third time I ever actually deliberately took characters from other works and tried to put them together was in *Lost Girls*. In the early weeks of talking about it I was putting a half baked idea that involved a sexual decoding of JM Barrie's *Peter Pan* based on nothing more substantial than the fact that Sigmund Freud said that dreams of flying were dreams of a sexual nature and that there's a lot of flying *Peter Pan*. What can I say, it was a pretty dumb idea. That was when Melinda contributed her idea of, 'What if we made it about three strong women protagonists?' Which led me to thinking, 'Well if Wendy from *Peter Pan* is one of them, who would the other two be?' And straight away we had Alice and Dorothy.

From that moment, the juxtaposition of those characters seemed like one of the best ideas I'd ever heard. I could suddenly see all of these possibilities about how we could take these three stories and turn them potentially into sexual histories, where we could use the symbols from those books and make them mean

something else than what their authors intended. And after we'd been working on this book for a few years and realised how much fun it was to do a pornography based on these fictional characters, it rather dimly occurred to me that I could maybe do the same thing with an adventure book. And that was where the idea for the League of Extraordinary Gentlemen came from. The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen is some bastard love child of *Lost Girls*. But you know, it's probably parentage to be proud of. It's certainly a lot of fun.

There's something very exhilarating taking a character like Alice and thinking it through. Thinking, 'Alright, what might this child have grown up to be?' For example I tried to make Alice's dialogue, whilst very arch and sophisticated, have that kind of curious dreamy logic to it that Carroll's little girl had in her dealings with things. Alice is not a drug addict in Lewis Carroll's story. But then again she does seem remarkably open to anything with 'Eat Me' written on it whatever the consequences, and hanging out with the hooped smoking caterpillar made famous in the Jefferson Airplane song 'White Rabbit'. Of all three books, I always thought that Alice in Wonderland, whether deliberate or not, was the most psychedelic and resonant with the drug experience. Making Alice fond of laudanum did seem kind of appropriate.

I think that Wendy, at least when we first see her, is very much the prim little mother of Barrie's book. Whereas Dorothy has some of the brash adventurous quality that typifies Frank Baum's Dorothy. Part of the fun was taking credible liberties with these characters whilst keeping them consistent with the originals. The same goes for the LOEG. Our Mr. Hyde is enormous in comparison to Stevenson's version. Then again in the final chapter of Stevenson's book you've got Dr. Jekyll worrying that Hyde seems to be get-

ting bigger. So our interpretation is an extrapolation. It wouldn't be any fun at all if you could just take these characters and do whatever you want with them. The fun for me is to try and keep them true to their original roots even if you are taking them to some far away and unexpected places.

LH: I was wondering what your thoughts on copyright were. All of those characters were out of copyright except of course Wendy, which gave you problems with Great Ormond Street Hospital...

AM: Yes, they wrote us this very nice letter thanking us for being so patient. My feeling about copyright is that there's such a thing as fair use, and just because all of the copyright lawyers who are employed by the big companies are actually paranoid, doesn't mean that I don't have the right to exercise fair use. In the earlier books of the League it wasn't so much of a problem because most of those characters being Victorian they'd passed into public domain. As effectively had the characters in *Lost Girls*. No one's exactly sure what kind of rights JM Barrie gifted to Great Ormond Street Hospital. From what we've heard it was quite possibly just the theatre rights, for the stage play. But there's obviously no point in the pornographers versus a children's charity. That's only going to play out one way in the popular press. So no, there weren't really copyright problems with those things.

Even in the first book of the League we were able to have an oriental doctor who'd arrived in Limehouse, but he's never referred to as Dr Fu Manchu because Sax Rohmer didn't have the simple human decency to die until 1959, so it was still in copyright. But there are ways around it. People nowadays are so clued up on the trivia of all these characters and if they're not, it's a click of a mouse away. So you can fill your books with

Artwork from: **From Hell (Knockabout)** Artwork by: **Eddie Campbell**

If I thought they were
stealing to build a giant
laser to blow up the moon,
then I might have a little
bit of sympathy.

If I thought they were stealing small change, and large change, from generation after generation of creators in order to build a giant laser to blow up the moon, sitting there with their white hats dropping people into the piranhas, then I might have a little bit of sympathy. A little bit of regard. But they are shit at everything they do. They've no idea how to run their businesses. This is why the comics industry has been going down the toilet since before I was first involved in it. Its descent has been checked by a

AM: Well they've done us proud with *Lost Girls*. Chris originally approached us and he asked Melinda how she thought the book would look when it was finished, which was disastrous because Melinda had got very baroque imaginings of what the finished book should look like, with the slipcase and gold embossing. So she told him all of this stuff, he swallowed hard and said, 'Well, we're only a small company, and I can't promise I'll be able to do all of that' but he'd certainly give it his best! And he certainly did. The final hurdle was when he had chosen the



Artwork from: *Watchmen* (DC Comics) Artwork by: Dave Gibbons



More examples of transformation within Alan Moore's stories Above-left: *Promethea* brings about the apocalypse in the final book of the *Promethea* series by introducing its inhabitants (and the readers) to a new world of imagination Left: After Evey's imprisonment, in *V For Vendetta*, she is finally shown that it is a puppet affair set up for her benefit by V and Above: Rorschach takes off his mask just before his death in *Watchmen*

highest quality, most expensive paper that the printers had offered him and it still wasn't quite what he wanted for *Lost Girls*. And he saw a stack of paper in the corner of the printers and asked, 'Well what about that?' And the printer said, 'Well no, we haven't offered you that, because that is far too expensive, it's archive quality. It's only for really, really special jobs and it'd double your printing costs'. And Chris went for it! He risked everything, because that is essentially what a small publisher was doing, risking everything, his personal well-being and security just because he believed in this book to that degree. For me that shows such commitment that I don't really need to look for any other publishers as long as Chris is prepared to have me, we've found a happy match.

LH: Do you have any other comics in the works then other than *League volume three*?

AM: That is about the only comic. I'm pretty much out of the comics industry, although not out of the medium. The stuff that Kevin is doing on the third *League* is just brilliant. But that is more or less all that I'm doing in the comics medium. There is the *Bumper book of Magic* that I'm doing with Steve Moore and a host of wonderful artists, also for *Top Shelf*. It'll be – I hope – a no nonsense and very entertaining guide to magic, what it is, how to do it, its entire history and hopefully done in an entertaining and informative way that I don't think has been tried before because I think previously they've been too interested in conjuring a spooky gothic aura around themselves.

LH: Are you still excited by the comics medium?

AM: For my own purposes, it's one of the media that I like to express myself in and I'm still excited by the possibilities. But I have to say I don't really read comics anymore. My disgust for the industry has meant that there are very few I can read without mixed feelings. And also, to tell the truth the comics field seem a bit moribund. On one hand at the Frank Miller extreme you've got these incredibly violent and gung ho narratives that are being churned out in a reflex action; a right-wing reflex action. On the other wing where you have the more sophisticated alternative comics. I find that they're beautifully, stylistically realised and conceived but at the end of the day it tends to be people in the richest and comfiest country in the world talking about their emotional problems. I mean there are obviously exceptions like Joe Sacco who are talking about something more important.

I read a film review of *Sin City* which said it was 'teenage and Neanderthal', which I thought was pretty accurate. Well you couldn't accuse the artists at the other end of being Neanderthals, but on the other hand their expressions of angst and emotional hollowness still seems teenage to me. It seems that the industry at the moment is stultified by on one half what people thought was hip in the 1980s, and the on the other a group that never really found its direction after the late 1980s. It's now more than 20 years later.

I suppose it's fairly endemic throughout

modern culture; it seems everyone thinks that all the great ideas have already been had, which is what people have always felt until they've bothered to come up with some new ideas. And most of the culture around me seems like a retread of something I enjoyed more first time around. I can get nostalgic for the psychedelic of the 60s, or the doom glitter of the glam period. But I would have thought that people living today should be able to demand their own culture suitable to their own times, and they should have artists and musicians who are willing to do the work of providing it for them. But I don't see much of that at the moment. And in the comics industry, it seems like people have found a golden rut where they can repeat the same riff from now until the end of their career. I don't see people trying to make use of the medium in novel or previously unimagined ways. And alright, not every story has to be a brashy, technical piece. But I'd like to see it now and again. It's what I liked about Will Eisner and Harvey Kurtzman, where they sometimes had a really beautifully timed technical riff that just left you gasping. Or some of the early twentieth century Sunday cartoons. I don't see anyone trying to surpass them. The field, if it's moving at all, is moving in entirely the wrong direction, so I'm bailing out. The comics medium as I practice it will continue to be an important part of my life I'm sure, but the comics industry – I haven't looked at it in years, it's too painful for one, and too boring!

Lost Girls is available now, as is most of Alan Moore's previous work. Old work by Melinda Gebbie can be found through *Last Gasp* (San Francisco)

WAKE UP! The art of: NIKKI McCLURE

Interview by: Natalie & Edd - natalie@rnzine.co.uk Illustrations by: Nikki McClure

Nikki McClure's art is a celebration. Her images are cut out of a single sheet of paper, a fragile web of cuts formed from a sharp x-acto knife, and sharp mind. Her images celebrate community, children, parenting, farming, food and wildlife. They document people involved in hard work, hands plucking cotton, women bringing in the tomatoes, seagulls gathering food. But the work is also a document of her own hard work - a product of her own time.

She follows in the footsteps of the great graphic social commentators - Käthe Kollwitz, Frans Massereel, Sue Coe etc. - but her artwork bucks the norm by exuding a sense of positivity and hope. I first came across her work on the book cover of Crimethinc's *Off The Map*. I've been loosely trying to keep track of her work ever since. She recently released *Collect Raindrops: The Seasons Gathered* a collection of her ongoing annual calendar project and I thought I should get in touch to see if she would be interested in an interview. It covers most of the bases: the North-West USA, family, illustrators as radicals and of course her love of crows.

LH: Your artwork is self-taught; why did you choose not to go to university to study it? Is it important to you that your craft is self-taught?

Nikki McClure: I did go to a university, I just didn't study art. I focused on Natural History: entomology, ornithology, botany, chemistry. I now think I was giving myself an art education of sorts by examining the natural world and my surrounding ecosystem so carefully.

I don't know if it is important or not that I am self-taught. The act of discovery has led me down this path, so in that way it is probably very important.

LH: How did creating artwork become your job? When did you realise this was what you wanted to do, and were able to survive doing it?

NM: I was working for the Department of Ecology but was making a lot of duck drawings and such for people. I had an opportunity to stay or leave: I left. I figured I could draw some ducks and cattails and do a little of this and that and eke out a living. I didn't want to be there in 20 years. I really love how my work is an extension of my living.

I realized that I could survive when I had to start paying taxes! The success of my calendar has smoothed out the rough seas a lot. I self-publish it. It feeds my family (plus we trade for food from our local farmers to last all summer, fall, and winter). Now it is a balance of how to sell without selling out.

LH: All the artwork I have seen of yours has been both positive and uplifting. I'm curious whether that's a conscious decision or simply a reflection of your personality? Is it important to you that your artwork should be positive?

NM: Yes and yes! Yes. Yes!

That is a nice word to say a lot. I am in awe over the magic of the universe. I believe that humans need to strengthen their positive attributes.

LH: There are recurring themes involving growth and birds. Is that deliberate or simply themes you're innately attracted to?

NM: A bit of both. I do have a mission and it seems to be innate. I grow things. I planted over 30 trees at my home in the city. I am a mother. I secretly want a pet crow and ask every crow I meet. I also have a responsibility, as a person who drives her car sometimes and who makes and consumes things, to contribute what I can to figure out a solution to mass extinction.

LH: What is it about crows which so fascinates you? In most western cultures they're normally regarded as portents of doom, but then again they've been adopted (graphically at least) by some in alternative culture because of their mischievousness and their perceived nonchalance to

VOICE





"I do like arranging life according to the seasons. So much of America doesn't seem to notice the strangeness of eating fresh cherries in February. I'm watching all the fruiting buds swell a bit more each day this February."

humans. Anyhow, I was interested in your take on them, and what it is that attracts you to them!

NM: I am fascinated by them. They are very intelligent, hang out in extended family groups, gather in the winter to roost; merging flight across the sky as all the crows from the corners of the city head off into the woods for the night. I celebrate them and want one to be my pet- or even better- my friend! They also sometimes represent me in the images.

LH: In an interview I read with you described your calendars as 'my attempt to call out to the world.' How successful do you think this call has been? And what was the reason for presenting the artwork as calendars; were you wanting to give the artwork additional utility, or was it simply that the work was about changing seasons which fitted in with the nature of a calendar?

NM: My first calendar was just a framework to get art made for a show that was a month away. I focused on things that could be foraged for during each month. It provided direction plus I liked the idea that it would be utilitarian. A calendar also ends up in kitchens and I like thinking of all the kitchens they are hanging in and all the goings on and good food they are witness to.

As far as 'calling out to the world', the calendar does that in two ways. The first is, "Hey, I'm here! I make pictures!" and it has opened doors for me and adventures have been offered because of that call. It is my calling card and portfolio. The second call is, "Wake Up!" I have

no way of knowing how that message is received and acted upon. Sometimes people write and tell me how the image and word resonated in their life in a meaningful way.

I do like arranging life according to the seasons. So much of America doesn't seem to notice the strangeness of eating fresh cherries in February. I'm watching all the fruiting buds swell a bit more each day this February.

LH: Your artwork is relatively small in size; is that because its important for the pieces to be accessible in size for people or something that is necessary working with cutting paper?

NM: I have a short attention span. Big pieces take longer. I don't have a lot of time as a Mama. I also work with a certain sheet size which is limiting. My friend, Beatrice Coron, a New York papercutter cuts from Tyvek. She just made a piece that is 27 feet long! I've been making stamps that are 1" x 1 1/2" ! Beatrice's world is much bigger than mine. And I like making people get really close to my pictures. It is more intimate.

LH: Your local environment seems to be a central feature of your artwork, is that something that has developed as you've grown older or something that has always featured in your work?

NM: It has always featured in my work. I am rooted here. I am a bit more brave in making my work obviously autobiographical as I get older. That autobiography is connected to a specific location. South Puget Sound, Olympia, my home,

my family.

LH: Are there specific politics behind your artwork? Do you think that artwork can affect social change?

NM: Yes and yes. The politics are clean water, air, soil, food, birds, fish, animals, an awareness of sharing Earth. Art can affect social change. I try not to be didactic. I try to appeal to a common memory, an emotional connection to the earth. My next calendar, I think, will look more closely at people working together. America is pretty divided over the war, over religion, over class. And it is going to get nastier as the 2008 election gets nearer. I have already seen a couple of cars with huge American flags streaming on them, something I haven't seen since we invaded Iraq. I am interested in making eye contact, personalising the experiences, exchanging cookie recipes (maple syrup almond cookies anyone?). Maybe I can do this with my art? I still have a lot of work to do to make K  the Kollwitz smile.

LH: How has having a child/ family changed your artwork and your perception of creating artwork? Has it added urgency to your work, or allowed you to take more time over it?

NM: It has changed my work tremendously. First, love is very, very inspiring. Then add a child who you adore and are constantly observing as a muse and model. Then mix in no sleep and no time. At first I worked smaller with a new set of rules. Two naps is all I had time for each picture! Now he doesn't nap but I have trained myself to be more efficient. I only

WAKE UP !



work about 2 hours a day. When I sit down at my desk, I am ready to make a picture. I have to be. And if I can't figure out that picture, then I make the one I know how to start. If all else fails, I sweep the floor or do some laundry. I just built a studio at my home which allows me to sneak in phone calls and a few more hours a week as I play. I feel very lucky to be a working mother artist.

LH: What are your future plans for your art?

NM: I would love to letterpress print again. I am almost there. It is mostly a matter of no time. I need to travel to Japan again and get more paper. The colors there are beautiful. I would also like to show my art in Finland and Paris and England and other places. Expand my geography. The calendar travels. I want to too!

Go on picnics and walks in the woods.

Swim all summer.

I want to ride my bike with Finn this afternoon since it is sunny and I don't know why I am sitting inside at the computer-except that I am excited that you asked me for an interview. It has made me feel more radical, less of a humdrum Mom. Thank You! ☺

*Thanks to Nikki for taking the time to do the interview. More information about her work can be found at www.nikkimclure.com her book *Collecting Raindrops* is published by Harry N. Abrams, Inc. and should be available from most bookshops.*



NOTTINGHAM: ACCORDING TO STEVE LARDER

IT'S GOING TO BE A WHILE STILL BEFORE I STOP LOOKING LIKE A LOST CHILD ROAMING THESE STREETS. THIS IS MAINLY DUE TO MY LIFE IMITATING THAT OF A HERMIT, WHICH IS ENTIRELY MY FAULT. THERE'S MORE THOUGH, THANKS TO THE EFFORTS OF A VERY HELPFUL FEW, I NOW FEEL A BIT CLOSER TO THE CITY I'M CURRENTLY CALLING HOME. THIS IN MIND, I DECIDED TO LIST A FEW ASPECTS I'VE ENJOYED SO FAR...

① LIDL BOY MAN



MOST MORNINGS I WALK PAST THIS OLD TIMER. HE HAS THE SADDEST EYES I THINK I'VE EVER SEEN AS HE FLOPS ALONG, WITH TIMID UNCERTAIN STEPS. ALWAYS WITH A CRUNCH AND LIDL SHOPPING BAG, HE'S A RELIABLE POP REASONING (STAY TO THE DAY)

② PAGE 15

PROBABLY THE ONLY COMIC SHOP WHERE YOU'RE LIKELY TO HEAR MUCH OF MISERY OR DRAPED BEING PLAYED IN PUBLIC. I'VE BEEN KNOWN TO SPEND MANY AN HOUR NODDING IT UP IN HERE, I LOVE IT. I LOVE IT GOOD.



ALSO SAY HELLO TO CAROLINE WHO WORKS THERE. SHE IS AN ACE COMIC BOOK LADY

③ HENRY'S KITCHEN



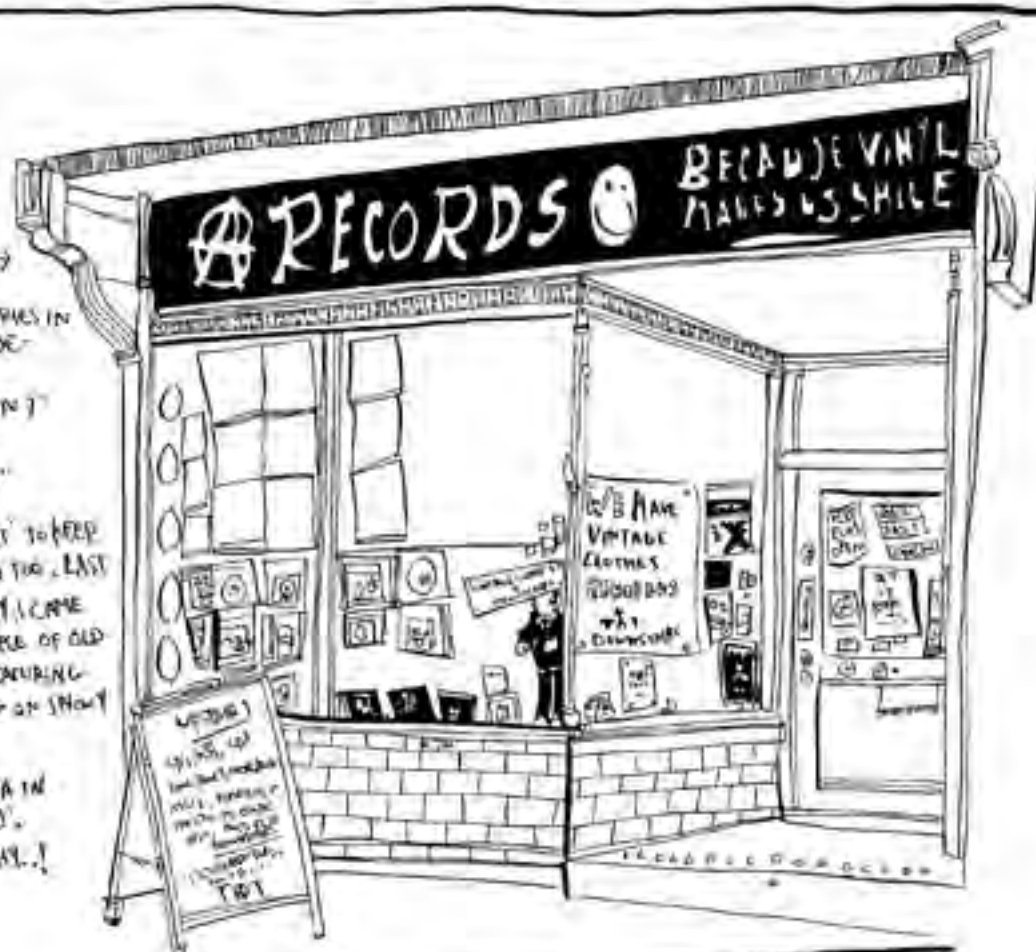
HENRY WILL FEED YOU INCREDIBLE VEGAN TREATS. IF YOU'RE INTO GARLIC, (WHICH LET'S FACE IT, OF COURSE YOU ARE) IT'S ALWAYS A PLEASURE FOR THE TASTE BUDS.

ASK HIM ABOUT THE 'PIE-CAKE'...

ANARCHY RECORDS

RECENT DISCOVERIES IN
HERE INCLUDE:
-DS-13 7"
-DETESTATION 7"
-INFEST 12"
-SHELLAC 7"

PLENTY OF 'TAT' TO KEEP
YOU INTERESTED TOO. LAST
TIME I STOPPED BY, I CAME
OUT WITH A COUPLE OF OLD
PHOTOGRAPHS FEATURING
'MAN WITH GUN ON SNOW
MOUNTAIN'
AND
'MAN ON VESPA IN
SWITZERLAND'.
NOT SURE WHY...!



2ND HAND BOOKSHOP

ABOUT 2 MINUTES
DOWN THE ROAD FROM
ANARCHY RECORDS, YOU
FIND THIS PLACE.
NEEDLESS TO
SAY, 2ND HAND
BOOKSHOPS ARE NEARLY
ALWAYS OPEN.
THIS IS NO
EXCEPTION

THESE TWO SHOPS
ARE SITUATED DOWN
MANSFIELD ROAD. THEY
MAKE A SIMPLE
WALK INTO TOWN VERY
DELICIOUS, AS YOU'RE
LIKELY TO SPEND LONGS
IN BOTH BEFORE YOU'RE
DONE ANYTHING ELSE.

JERRY & WESTERMAN

ANTHROPOLOGY BOOKS SECOND-HAND



⑥ THE CHAMELEON ARTS CAFE



THE CURRENT HOME OF
RAGING HARDCORE IN NOTTINGHAM,
AS DEMONSTRATED BY CHRIS.
← SITUATED RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE
OF TOWN, YOU'RE LIKELY TO
FIND MANY TINNITUS INDUCING ACTS
PERFORM FROM ACROSS THE
GLOBE HERE.

'NGHC' IS REIGNING SUPREME
THANKS TO THIS LITTLE VENUE.
AS A RESULT, DULL MOMENTS
ARE FEW AND FAR BETWEEN.
THE LANDLORD IS A LOONY TOO.
ALWAYS A PLUS.

KEEP YOUR EYES PEELLED
FOR
POWER STANCES

BOULTY'S HAIR

GENERAL AGGRO

ALA
FRANCIS!



TIERKI JEREMIE



PARTICULARLY WHEN
TINNITUS IS IN FACE TALK
UP IS



THERES LOADS MORE IVE LEFT OUT. BUT THEN, I'VE ONLY 4 PAGES TO DRAW ON. THAT, AND I'M A BIT LAZY. HO HUM.

I SOMETIMES THINK IT DOESN'T MATTER WHERE I AM, MOST OF THE TIME I'M JUST SAT INSIDE ANYWAY, DOODLING INTO THE EARLY HOURS. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THIS MEAN I'M SOCIALLY INEPT (SOLITUDE WILL DO THAT TO YOU, HA!), I HAVE THE EYESIGHT OF A MOLE AND A BAD BACK. MOAN, MOAN, MOAN... SAYING THIS, THE ACHES AND PAINS ARE... SATISFYING, I GUESS. I FEEL LIKE I HAVEN'T PUSHED MYSELF ENOUGH IF I'M NOT TOTALLY EXHAUSTED AFTERWARDS. THIS IS PROBABLY UNWISE. I THINK I SHOULD GET OUT MORE... YEP.



My Monkey Ride

LATE NIGHT SHOPPING
by dh!

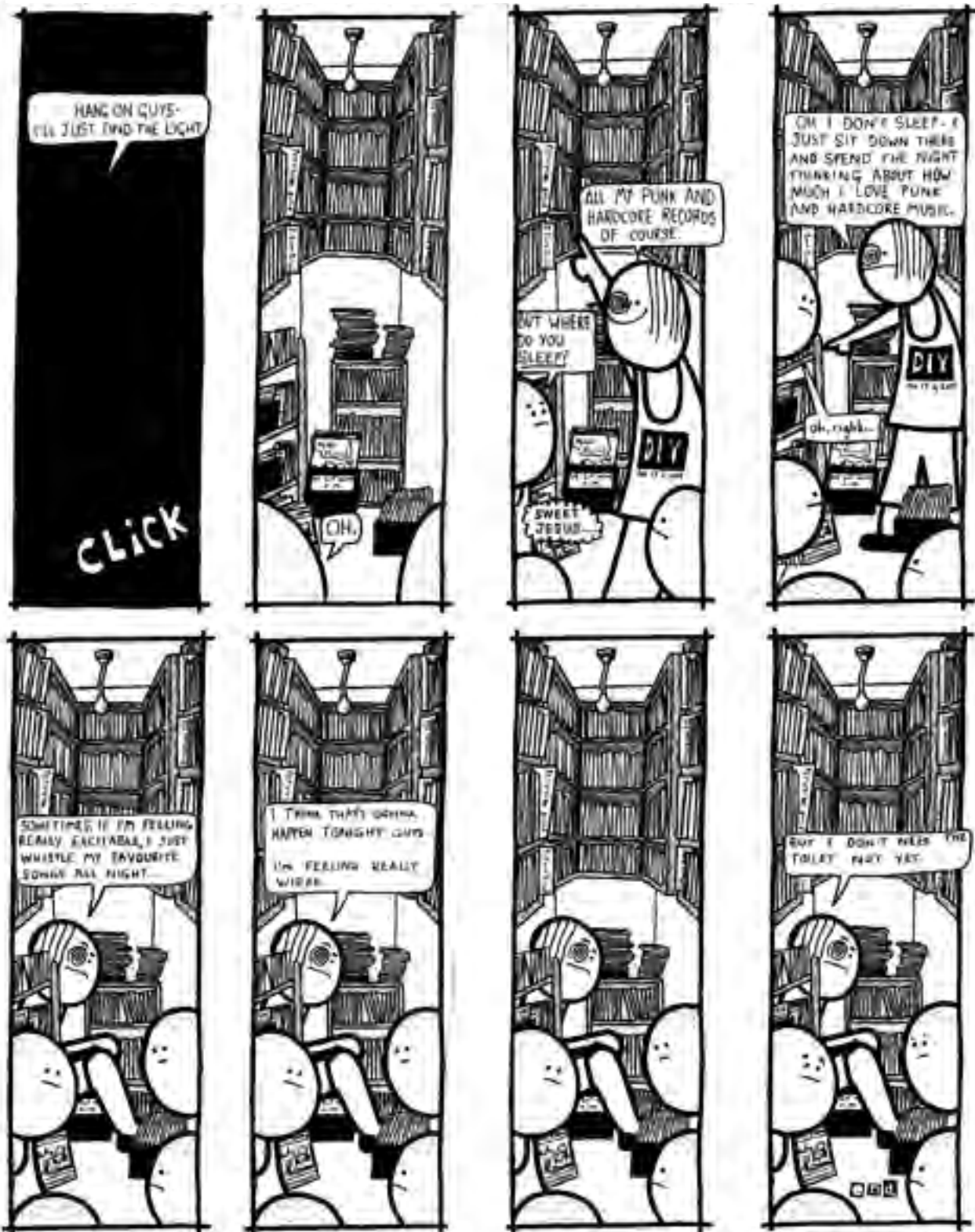




DAILY COMIC | [HTTP://HEYMANKEY.COM](http://heymankey.com) - "AUTUMN", "WINTER", "#3" & "#12" OF H4R OUT NOW!

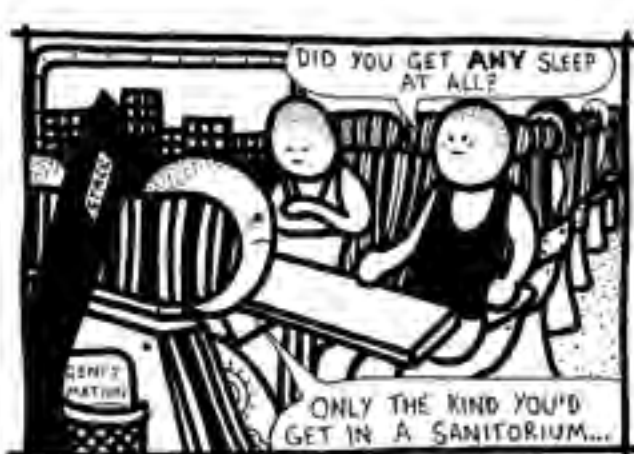
Chatstonbridge Des = DIY UNTO DEATH PART 2 By Paul Stapleton

THE STORY SO FAR: Dismal and inept punk promoter and DIY label manager Des has invited Leeds based straight edgers No Compromise to play his hometown of Chatstonbridge. They play a pointless set to no-one, lose £300 in the process and now, in dire need of some crash space, are about to be led into a dark storeroom of his non profiting launderette...



beat_bedsit@yahoo.co.uk

www.pogscribbles.org





I saw the number of the beast and survived

by: Chris 12o5 - slowergherkin@hotmail.com

The devil is standing in front of me. His face is smeared with animal fat and charcoal. He emits a blood curdling groan as he shakes a pitch fork at me. I laugh, partially out of confusion but a little bit from fear. He strikes me across the face with his greasy black hands. I step back and press myself against the safety of bricks and mortar. Our eyes are locked together. The scent of animal corpses hangs in the air, mixing with the aroma of chimney smoke and cow dung. We are frozen in time. It is judgement day. Around me cameras flash; glasses clink. A piece of chocolate is thrust into my hand. The devil chugs wine from a measuring jug, burps, and strides off into the darkness.

Welcome to the village of Wundschuh, Austria.

Shortly after arriving in Austria I was told about the festival of 'Krampus'. The students I teach were surprised that the people of England don't partake in this catholic/pagan festival as it is common in many European countries. On a cold December night members of the local community dress up as the devil and tour the village. They knock on every house and ask to hear what the children have been up to during the year. The dutiful parents hand over a list of wrongdoings, for which the children are then punished. Depending on the area, punishments vary. It can range from beatings with a chain, a slap on the wrist or a smack across the bum with a plank of wood. At each house the devils are given drinks, usually home made schnapps or cider. By the time they reach the mid-point of the village they are totally wasted. They stand in the road screaming, stopping cars and demanding money for passage. My flatmate was told a story about a village in upper Austria where they stuffed a live pig full of bangers and exploded it. Considering how tame British Guy Fawkes night is - we just burn a dummy on a fire to commemorate Guy Fawkes, a man who tried to blow up the houses of parliament - I was keen to experience this madness for myself. Surely it couldn't be that bad?

Fast forward to December 2007. There I was, sitting in a van with my Austrian buddy Gerfried heading to his grandparents' house in the Austrian countryside, where "Krampus is more authentic". I was told to wear clothes that I could throw away and keep my hair hidden. We arrived at the house under the cloak of darkness. His aunt was peeping through



“Two giant devils and a man dressed as St Nicholas were screaming at cars on the road. Gerfried approached his brother and was subjected to a giant hand covered in animal fat smeared across his face. I laughed. A mistake, apparently...”

a gap in the curtains. We went into the house and drank wine. The excitement was palpable - Gerfried's brother was a Krampus this year. After a short time sitting in comfortable silence in the warm house, we heard a deathly moan from outside. We slung on our grubby jackets and crept outside. Skulking against the walls of the house, I stole a glance into the street. Two giant devils and a man dressed as St Nicholas were screaming at cars on the road. Gerfried approached his brother and was subjected to a giant hand covered in animal fat smeared across his face. I laughed. A mistake, apparently, as he then approached me, screamed in my face and rubbed the fat from ear to ear. Pretty disgusting. If you can believe it, this portion of the evening was fairly tame. Gerfried's dad took photos of us with the visitors; we got chocolate, drank wine and ended up having a 'normal' conversation in the porch of the house. After the guests resumed their travels around the village I thought it was all over. "Not that bad," I thought to myself.

Gerfried suggested we head over to the disco and see what was happening there. I had started to wipe the fat from

my face, but he suggested I leave it on "for protection". I gave him a strange look. We walked into the village with his cousin surrounded by gaggles of screaming children. They were genuinely terrified. The 'disco' was a car park with a sound system blaring out Tina Turner and euro mountain pop. We drank several gluhweins while watching people arrive in varying states of disarray. There were rumours of Slovenian Krampus' touring the villages and causing chaos. When I considered this idea - groups of drunken men in disguise causing havoc in the darkness with weapons and the gift of anonymity - I shuddered at the possibilities. Children were hiding all over the car park while adults munched chestnuts and chatted like casual spectators at a football match. Eventually the Krampus' arrived. They were wasted, screaming, sweating black fat and wild eyed. Next to me a girl was pinned down on a table with a chain so the Krampus could climb on top of her. No one seemed particularly surprised. Apparently it is quite common for boys who fancy girls from school to express their affection in this way. The car park was throbbing with life. A Krampus tried to chat me up in broken English. I looked

at him leaning on his metal pitch fork wearing animal skins, horns and chains, his skin smeared in the stinking black substance. I told him no thanks.

And thus, my crazy catholic adventure was over. I had a really great time that evening, although I couldn't get my head around any of it. The bureaucratic health and safety culture of Britain means that nothing like this would ever be allowed, but Austria is a land where many old traditions live on, often protected by the strength of Catholicism in the country. I can honestly say that I have never experienced anything as bizarre and anachronistic as what I saw that night. If I didn't think religion was mad before, I certainly do now! As the Alpine rock music faded beneath a blanket of stars, I felt relieved that I had seen the number of the beast. And survived.

slowergherkin@hotmail.com





Our first stop is a place called Hope (I wouldn't want to live here)

by: Phil Chokeword - myspace.com/philger

1. We catch a taxi to Canada Place since we're worried about missing our tour bus. We've got the fear that our skytrain won't make the connection at Broadway and we'll be late and the bastard thing will drive off without us. This fear turns out to be fairly well founded, since the coach leaves only ten minutes late and minus two people who have to catch the hound to Golden and meet us there. They get in at 3am.

2. Our first stop is a place called Hope. Apparently they filmed bits of Rambo here. There's mountains and snow and not much else. We hit up a corner shop for bottled water and the magazine rack is stacked with porn, cunningly hidden behind a thin row of women's magazines. I would bet that the ratio of wank mags to residents is rather high. We walk a while through the slush and while admittedly first impressions can be way off, from the few blocks we see it seems like the city of Hope is misnamed. I'm glad there's a bus waiting to take us outta town. I bet that there's a lot of young people here who never take one.

3. The majority of people on our bus are ESL students. Me and Hannah are wearing snow boots and ski wear. Its fukkin well below freezing. We stand in the Revelstoke McDonald's car park and

watch as Brazilians in jeans and trainers jump into drifts as high as my waist and get back on to the bus covered in snow. Hypothermia, snow cones and Big Macs. Genius.

4. We get into Golden at about 8. Its dark, frozen and our hotel is on the side of the Trans-Canada Highway. The only place to eat really is Subway on the other side of the road. We climb over the snow drifts on either side of the road and walk across the deserted highway, sure that we're going to get taken out any minute. The sandwich tastes pretty good for once, but perhaps that's because I risked death to buy it. After that, we swim in another hotel's pool and walk back trying not to stack it on black ice in the darkness.

5. Next day, we step off the bus at Emerald Lake. We walk around and pretty much instantly our hands hurt in our gloves; I pull my scarf over my mouth and nose and the steam from my breath freezes to my eye lashes. I've never felt cold like it. It doesn't detract from how stunning the frozen lake is, sat as it is in the Canadian Rockies, surrounded by mountains and snow covered trees. We walk across the road bridge, trying to take everything in and shuddering as we watch as people ignore the thin ice signs.

6. It's not an exaggeration to say that Lake Louise is the most beautiful place I've ever seen. We skate on the edge of the snow covered lake, trying hard not to stack it on the uneven surface as the German blokes from our bus whizz around us. In front, the mountain valley ends in more snow capped mountains and a glacier; behind us, there's another Fairmont hotel, sat like a castle on the edge of the lake. The lake is in Banff National Park, and there's strict building restrictions so the hotel is even more striking than others in the chain since it's pretty much sat on its own in the wilderness. We stumble around for a while, taking photos of the scenery and the ice sculpture of the hotel, before grabbing a coffee in the Fairmont. According to our tour guide, it's \$300 at least here for the cheapest room. At least you get free breakfast.

7. The raised metal walkway runs above the river below, which is frozen for the most part and supporting a thick layer of snow. Every now and then though, there's holes where we can see pale green water flowing from the waterfall downstream under the ice. This is Johnston Canyon. We hike up to the foot of the waterfall, which is frozen too and looks like something from a fairy tale, all icicles and thick frozen sheets. The water's still flowing and you can see

it under the solid surface. It's stunning. I then slip and crack my head on a rock on the way out (which is stunning in a completely different way. Gettit? Ha).

8. By the time we get to Banff there's only a few hours to kill. The bus goes up to another Fairmont, before taking us to Bow River and another frozen waterfall. We then check into our hotel, which is just about the plushiest thing we've stayed in all trip (although admittedly, we've mostly been living in hostel dorms with drunken snoring bastards or spartan university halls). If it wasn't New Years Eve and we had more time, we would probably make the most of the hot tub, have a pint in the bar and chill out on the stupidly comfy beds. Instead, I break the coffee machine and mop it up with the kind of white towels they use in adverts for washing powder.

9. Me and Hannah have been together for three New Years. The first, she baby sat me whilst I threw up and made sure I didn't die in my sleep. The second, I drank free shots of something that had weird bits of gold floating in it and acted like a prick. I'm pretty nervous that I'll make three bad new years in a row, but instead we hang out in the Rose & Crown with the ESL students, drinking a couple of pints and enjoying the covers band that probably normally stink like a dead rat in a wall cavity but fit the occasion. Come midnight, I'm still standing. I don't even heckle. (I find out the next day that exactly 7 hours earlier, at midnight in another time zone, my brother got engaged. Congratulations, bro! Good work).

10. I don't let Hannah say it until we get back into our rooms and there's nothing left for me to fukk up. But 2007 ended well. ☺

"intelligent input darlin'..."

1. Hannah suggested that my last column might put people off Vegetarian Shoes, which I didn't see until she pointed it out. This then totally made me feel like I'd scored an own goal. See, it was meant to be a story about a cool area of Toronto and me being dumb enough to go get drunk even though I'd wrecked my feet, not give anyone the excuse to rock Nikes. Seriously, most people get on with them fine, check them out, I think I have warped feet or something. Guh!

2. In case you were wondering - the Fairmont Hotel chain followed the railway across Canada. They look like they aren't for the likes of me because they aren't.

3. Drowning out people on the #3 bus: Career Suicide, Fucked Up, Go It Alone, 86 Mentality and the new Ergs! CD.

4. "...why don't you just have another beer then?" FD6 is up as a PDF at lasthours.org.uk (cheers Edd!). It ain't Shakespeare but check it out if you're bored!

The Met on the march

by: Itch Fox - thekingblues@yahoo.co.uk

Picture the scene: Monday 23rd Jan 2008, a protest is being held and despite the turnout not being massive, the press coverage is. The police are everywhere but none of the marchers are being harassed, penned in, photographed, searched or arrested. Almost sounds like we live in a democracy. For once, the Met even overestimated the number of marchers rather than criminally underscoring them! There is one difference to this particular protest however; it is made up almost entirely of policemen, there ... to demand more pay. Anyone who has been on a protest in recent years will be familiar with the Forward Intelligence Team (FIT). These are police photographers originally set up to gather evidence about football hooligans and the like. They have turned their eye to photographing anyone who dares disagree with government policy, photographing nearly everyone who attends protests, legally and peacefully, to gather information.

An anarchist group known as FIT Watch decided to give the police a taste of their own medicine as they exercised the right to protest that they deny to others. Originally they handed out flyers claiming they were from The Met, penning in the police but they soon got found out. Another member of FIT Watch attempted to infiltrate the march but was refused being told it was an "invitation only event, open only to police federation members, their families and friends". This led to the arrest of 2 anarchists originally for breaching the commissioner's regulations, then later in custody it was changed to highway obstruction.

Someone at the front of the march was easily recognised: a

thug in a cheap £40 Debenhams style suit? Must be a BNP member. Yep, BNP councillor in Barking and Dagenham and BNP's candidate for Mayor of London '08 Richard Barnbrook was out in full force. To say he's a very confused individual is somewhat of an understatement- Barnbrook was previously an artist and made a film called *HMS Discovery: A Love Story*. This was widely described as gay porn. He's also engaged to Simon Clarke, the 'BNP ballerina' who has a mixed race child from a previous relationship- these two parts of Barnbrook's life obviously don't go down well with the rest of his far right supporters and highlight his 'confused' personality, but that's another story altogether.

When the police were questioned about the attendance of the BNP member, the Police Federation's Metin Enver replied "Some of my colleagues saw we had the BNP Mayoral candidate with us. The one thing we want to make clear is we didn't invite him. It wasn't a closed march. He chose to attend by his own accord which is his right in a democracy. It is disappointing if anyone chose to join the march for their own agenda." This now leaves an interesting situation. The FIT Watch members who were arrested are challenging the police to take them to court because the police will either then have to admit to lying about the march being an "invitation only event" to the anarchists, or admit to lying about not inviting the BNP member. We'll have to wait and see what the result is. In the mean time, FIT Watch hold regular public meetings, their website is www.fitwatch.blogspot.com for more information.



"When you pirate MP3s, you're downloading economics"

by: Chris Lever - www.confinedtothelibrary.info

"People have a right to share copies of published works."

Richard Stallman

"According to conventional economic theory, goods with zero marginal costs should be public goods to be given away without cost rather than be sold as a commodity."

Michael Perelman

Economics...twitch...marginal costs... cough...public goods...splutter. If you're starting to feel a little queasy you will undoubtedly sympathise with the situation I have been in for the last year and a half: voluntarily - I repeat, voluntarily! - researching the economics of intellectual property... swoon. If you do not think you can stomach the rest of this column, you are, of course, excused from the table. Feel free to peruse the rest of the zine for something more radical in comparison. In contrast to the abundance of worthy content in this issue, I am painfully aware of how desperately I am vying for your attention. Should you choose to stay seated however, I will regale you with an equally radical belief - that economists and peer-to-peer file-sharers have a lot in common.

The title of this column, as some might have already observed, is a play on an anti-RIAA (Recording Industry Association of America) poster currently swarming the Internet. "When you Pirate MP3s, You're Downloading Communism" the poster proclaims, and has recently been detourné to declare: "When you pay for MP3s, You're Rockin' Out with The Man" (both versions can be viewed at www.modernhumorist.com). Without wishing to bore you with all the ins and outs of copyright law and its crusade against peer-to-peer file-sharing it will suffice to say that whilst intellectual property rightholders have

succeeded in bringing an end to the previously radical utopias of Napster and Grokster, they have been unable to thwart its underground offspring - the BitTorrent protocol, which accounts for roughly one third of all Internet traffic at any given time. Whilst the copyright industries continue to assert their belief that downloading is illegal, ringing this point home with some exemplary court cases, distributed file-sharing networks have become too pervasive to police effectively. As a result the UK Government has recently announced plans to ban persistent peer-to-peer file-sharers from the Internet altogether (three strikes and you're out!), in a similar vein to the 'communications' ban placed upon notorious 'hacker' Kevin Mitnick upon his release from solitary confinement. Kevin Mitnick got (and served) almost five years, and was prohibited from using a computer for another three. All his skills are related to computers, and he has been prohibited from even lecturing on the subject. (Schneier 2000:382). The Government proposed policing of peer-to-peer filesharing will not be undertaken at the corporation's expense - Internet Service Providers will have to monitor subscribers' internet use and give users two chances before disconnection. They will be emailed once, suspended a second time and then cut off completely if they do not change their file sharing behaviour (www.out-law.com/page-8868).

In response to the hard-line advocates of 'downloading is illegal' a cyberactivist/ libertarian response is often found emanating from the peer-to-peer community and many a pub-table debate. As I'm sure many of you have already mooted this point at some time in recent years, you will be familiar with arguments to the tune of 'I can get away with it, so why should I stop?', and, 'If they didn't charge so

much for it, I wouldn't have to download it illegally.' Drawing support from the likes of John Perry Barlow (former lyricist for the Grateful Dead turned political activist) and Richard Stallman (pioneer of the concept of 'copyleft' software, and main author of several copyleft licenses including the most widely used free software license, the GNU General Public License), such responses normally argue that copying is the 'natural law of the Internet' and that we have a 'right' to share copies of published works. Whilst it remains true that the Internet is - in its very nature - a distributed copying machine - one that facilitates acts of mass copyright infringement - in the face of legal arguments to the contrary, the cyberactivist attempting to argue for a hypothetic right inevitably gets tagged a communist. It becomes hard to argue for theft, and harder still when the industry gets its minions to do its bidding, 'Would you go into a CD store and steal a CD? It's the same thing, people going into the computers and logging on and stealing our music. It's the exact same thing, so why do it?' (Britney Spears, *'What the Artists and Songwriters Have to Say'*, Musicunited.org, 2003). Why do it, indeed Britney? The cyberactivist may still feel it is his right to do so, but where does this 'right' find its validity? Where should the natural law of the Internet seek its legitimacy? In the natural law of economics, silly!

Economics - in its modern parlance - concerns itself with the allocation of scarce or rivalrous resources. Intangible property is non-rivalrous - whereas tangible property is inherently rivalrous. For example, take this issue of Last Hours firmly in your hand. It is inherently rivalrous - a scarce resource because only one person can read your copy at any given time. It cannot be in two or more places at once, yet MP3s, on the contrary, are inherently non-rivalrous.

"Whilst the copyright industries continue to assert their belief that downloading is illegal, ringing this point home with some exemplary court cases, distributed file-sharing networks have become too pervasive to police."



Illustration by: Laura Hughes - www.laura-illustration.co.uk / hug.laura@gmail.com

A copy of an MP3 can be in more than one place at any given time, coursing through the capillaries of the Internet without depriving the original owner of their 'copy'. To Britney's questionable logic, Stanford Law professor Lawrence Lessig offers a fine retort: "If you go into Tower Records and you pick up a CD and walk out you might be chargeable with a misdemeanour, probably a \$1,000 fine. According to the RIAA, if you download the same songs off the Internet you could be liable for \$1.5 million and damages. Which one is the really harmful activity? Taking from Tower Records actually deprives Tower Records of some money. But downloading from the Internet, its arguable whether it harms anybody." (Punk Planet, Issue 74, July & August 2006).

This is the crux of the radical economic argument I wish to put forward, although Lessig did not take it to its logical conclusion. The natural law of economics - supported by Nobel Economic Laureates Kenneth Arrow and Paul Samuelson - dictates that "goods with zero marginal costs should be public

goods to be given away without cost rather than be sold as a commodity." Simply put, when the marginal cost (the cost of producing one additional unit) nears zero, the good - whatever it is - should be given away for free. Here - you may be surprised to hear - economic man advocates the giving away of MP3s, given that the cost of copying one additional unit is near zero (arguably only an unquantifiable amount of electricity is required to copy an MP3, given that you already own the computer required to copy it). If it costs the industry near-zero to make that unit, then it costs them near-zero if you steal it! Of course, this is of no surprise to the cyberactivist, railing against industry over-inflation of that near-zero marginal cost, inability to adjust to the online-market, and their desire to protect the totalitarian distribution networks they have monopolised on since the 1960s. Of course, these vast distribution networks are of no use to the new distribution network we affectionately call the Internet. There are no more Tower Records from which to take. Economics dictates that the reduced marginal cost

of delivering music online permits the Recording Industry to charge somewhere between 0-5p a track. Any more is just naked profiteering, and requires a sympathetic legislature to protect industry self-interest. Alas, as Michael Perelman observes: "When the sacred laws of economics suggest something that might not be in the best interests of business, economic theory is swept aside" and law, read government, read business, becomes the real root of the problem, and market populism - the belief that markets are more democratic than anything else - reigns supreme.

Whilst, I have only touched on the underlying problems at hand, I hope you appreciate the simple, circular-logic to be found in this unlikely alliance. It is no longer a case of 'us' against the 'industry', if 'we' have the economists on our side. Whilst 'we' - the file-sharing multitude - radically endorse economic law in our active resistance, the economists invest legitimacy in our 'right' to share copies. We are not pirating MP3s...we're downloading economics. ☐



by: Natalie - natalie@rnzine.co.uk

For a long time I was a mere pedestrian but now I can proudly call myself a cyclist.

other such attired shoppers, like a secret handshake of recognition.

As a breed, cyclists have their own share of rival gangs, namely black cab drivers in London and all other road users elsewhere. There's no love lost between cyclists and taxi drivers – it's akin to Jets versus Sharks or Mods versus Rockers. They hate us, we hate them. They are our natural predators.

a tendency to stop just as abruptly as they start, and not really go anywhere particularly useful.

I now use my bike to commute to work. In my last job I could walk there but with this new job the prospect of overpriced travel cards and a poxy bus journey was enough to motivate me so I've been biking since June last year. I've actually been pleasantly surprised at how much I'm enjoying it, (albeit with the exception of when it's rubbish weather – then I grumble and curse my bike). This also means I've done my first winter now, and stuck at it, which I've heard is a milestone for any new cyclist.

I also got a bike because my boyfriend had been pestering me about getting me a bike for ages – I think he liked the idea of having a bike punx girlfriend he could coast around town with. I'd previously resisted, citing love of life as the main reason for refusal – but clearly the 274 bus pushed me to my limits.

My mum wasn't impressed when

"For a long time I was a mere pedestrian but now I can proudly call myself a cyclist."

I told her I was cycling - I can understand why; London is pretty much the least cycling-friendly place at the moment. I've fallen off twice now. Neither time was especially serious but twice was enough. The thought of being in a proper crash terrifies me. Sometimes as I'm cycling along, past what I might consider a hairy spot or junction, a vision of an untimely collision will flash up. Touch wood (or should that be lycra) myself, nor my friends will never come remotely close to this.

The first time, as I like to tell everyone in order to maintain my dignity was entirely not my fault. Another cyclist was going the wrong way down the cycle lane I was using. So much for solidarity. It was a moment of panic as we both tried to swerve to avoid each other, with the eventual crash as I fell landing straight in the path of oncoming traffic. Cars stopped and asked if I was all right, yet the only thing racing through my mind was to start shouting obscenities at the other cyclist as I jumped up from the ground as quickly as possible. I came away with heavy bruises over my hand, arm and thigh but it could have been a lot worse - like his bike which was wrecked.

The second time was an act of folly I definitely won't repeat. I still cringe to think about how I looked out of the window at the iced up roads and thought it wasn't that bad and that I'd be okay to bike to work as I was running late and couldn't be fucked to pay more money on my Oyster card that day. Approximately two minutes after getting on my bike I was flat on the ground, having skidded on the frosty corner. Not the most unpredictable occurrence in the world!

Having a bike also means I get to go on critical masses now, which are really fun big group bike rides, reclaiming the roads, with less of the bored or tired feet that normally accompanies protests. Critical masses bring out all the eccentric bikers, who hippy-fy their bikes with sound systems, flowers or flags. I've even seen someone with a penny farthing on one, which was weird as I had no idea they were still available, and even more fun to see them mounting it.

Personally I've got quite a ladies bike, with the low set frame made especially for people in skirts and a cute basket on the handlebars. I think it suits me. It's more continental shopper than racer, but that's fine as I don't like to go too fast anyway. Whilst I might now be a cyclist, there's still a pecking order to bikes and mine would be laughed at by all the courier crew. They're so cycle-core they don't even bother to wear helmets... Many have fixed wheels, with only the one brake, which just goes way above my understanding of how bikes work. I'm anything but lady-like when it comes to people that cut me up though. Cycling has unearthed a previously unrealised aggressive side to me, with bike-rage bubbling over easily with inconsiderate drivers.

Being a cyclist also means I get to take an interest in cycling related news. I can feel incensed when politicians talk about cracking down on 'rouge cyclists' when we all know it's dodgy drivers. I've started reading the Two Wheels column in the Guardian's G2 and I'm considering membership to the London Cycling Campaign. I like being in the bike club and being a bike grrrl. I just hope all cyclists can stay safe when enjoying the freedom a bike can bring. ☘

I *still* love you Against Me!

by: PJ Shepherd

I recently went on tour for a couple of weeks with Imadethismistake. We played 14 different shows in 14 different places in four different countries. At just about every one of these shows there was someone waiting to give me a hard time for being an Against Me! fan.

I love Against Me!. No band has ever written music that has made me feel the same way Against Me! does and I honestly doubt any band ever will. But once you've signed to a major label and the punk police are out it doesn't really seem to matter what your music sounds like.

Perhaps many Last Hours readers already know about this band, but for those that don't I'll give a very brief history of the band. They started out with a few E.P.s that were self released or released on small labels and then released their first album on No Idea Records. Their second, third and fourth albums (the fourth being a live record) were released on Fat Wreck Chords as well as lots of vinyl and a DVD. Their fifth album, "New Wave," has recently been released on Sire Records, a label funded by Warner Records.

Now, there are some people I met who just weren't that keen on how Against Me!'s new album sounds simply as a matter of opinion. Fair enough, it's very different to their previous albums, but then again every Against Me! album is completely different. That's one of the things that I find so great about the band. They've tried something radically different on each album. I don't want to listen to the same album ten times in a row like a Pennywise fan in denial.

There were others though who tried to claim that Against Me!'s new sound was representative of how they have left their old sound, and consequently their old ideals, behind them and sold out. Time after time, the lyrics to the title track off their first album "Reinventing Axl Rose" were quoted to me:

But so many people I met on tour would go to a ridiculous extent to explain to me how much they now hate this band.

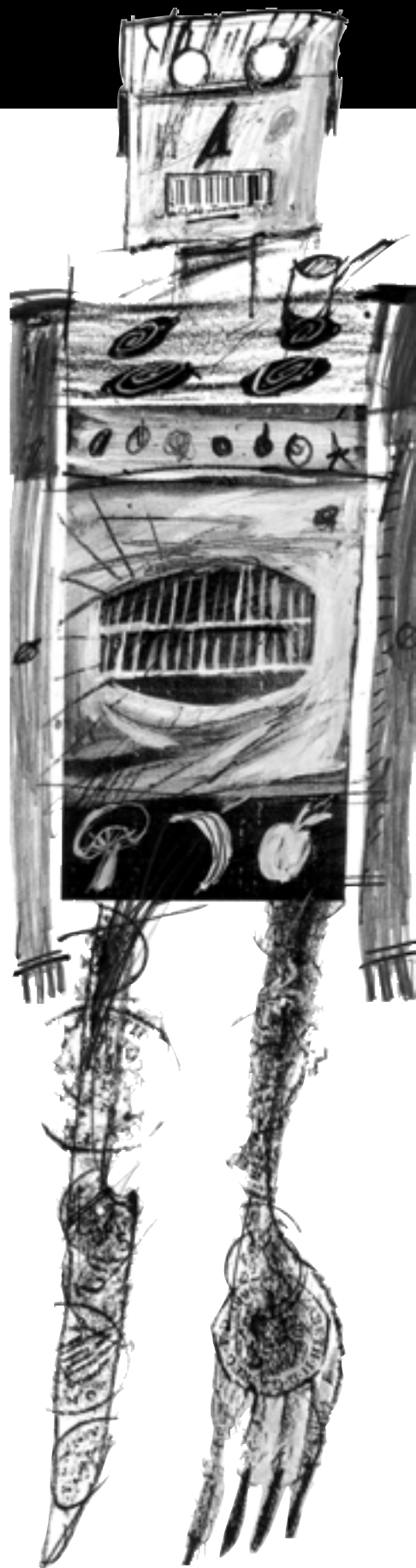
"We want a band that plays loud and hard every night, and doesn't care how many tickets are counted at the door; who would travel one million miles and would ask for nothing but a plate of food and a place to rest."

I have seen Against Me! a total of 15 times. Not once have I ever been disappointed by their live show. I challenge anyone to give me a genuine account of when they didn't give 110% live. Against Me! tour constantly. They travel all over the world, and having spent a decent amount of time with them, I can tell you from my heart that these guys are just people who love playing music and want to do it for as long as possible. On top of that, you have to remember that that song was written years ago. Just because they wrote a song years and years ago about how much they enjoy playing basement shows doesn't mean that they're assholes for doing something different now. There's nothing wrong with wanting to do other stuff as well and really make an impact with their music; and their music is good enough to make a big impact on people. I know it certainly has made a huge impact on me.

The other reason that the major label argument doesn't hold for me in this case is that the contract they had on Fat Wreck Chords is basically the same one that they are on now with Sire. I don't think that we should simply brand all bands that sign to majors as sell outs. Sire is a label that just does records. It's not like some of the other majors that are involved in hideous things like the arms trade. Sire just does records and nothing else. If the contract is the same as on Fat, there's no dodgy dealings within the label, and Against Me! get to tour constantly for no other reason than that they

just want to keep on rocking, then I really don't see the problem. The band had released a ton of stuff on Fat Wreck and according to them just wanted to see what it was like to be on a different label. Personally, I salute them for doing what they want to do despite knowing that they were going to get shit for it. Lead vocalist, guitarist and songwriter Tom Gabel said in an interview with Punknews "I don't want this band to end with a fizzle when it does eventually end. I want it to explode and be completely irreparable." (I would highly recommend reading this interview. You can see it at <http://www.punknews.org/article/15414>.)

But so many people I met on tour would go to a ridiculous extent to explain to me how much they now hate this band. I even heard a story of an "Against Against Me!" show that had been set up next to an actual Against Me! show, where bands were going to play covers of "all the old songs that they refuse to play now." Refuse to play? What a load of bullshit! I've seen Against Me! play every song off every album at least once in the 15 times I've seen them and even some of the songs off of the old self-distributed E.P.s that you might not expect to hear - so the idea of playing songs that the band "refuse" to play is quite frankly silly. If you don't like the way the band sounds now that is totally fair enough: don't listen to them if you don't like them. Simple as. To hate them so much just to show how punk you are is sad and crap. Remember, they're just a band. Surely you could be spending your time on more productive things for the scene than showing everyone how underground you are.





Don't eat shit and die

by: Isy Morgenmuffel

That was one of the suggestions for a title... Finally, finally the vegan cookbook me and Mike, with help from other Anarchist Teapot cooks, have been working on is done – it's called *'Another dinner is possible'* (it's a play on the slogan that probably no one recalls, it's *really* clever) and Active distribution printed it and are distributing it. It looks nice and has stroky almost wipeclean pages! And I'm still talking about food (and cooking) an awful lot... I think that our struggles around improving our access to good food, creating more sustainable production and fighting against animal exploitation, corporate dominance and industrial agriculture can be more than just a middle class/privileged luxury or issue of individual choice, and be part of a global movement. There are a bunch of grassroots projects around food that are creating real alternatives all around you once you start to look for them – from Food Not Bombs (who redistribute perfectly edible food that's thrown away and cook communal meals) to farmers markets, food co-operatives (who try to improve the affordability of good food by cutting out the 'middlemen') to community gardens where anyone can get their hands in and learn to grow their own, to healthy eating classes, community cafés, and organic farming. It's our demand for cheap and 'easy' food, and corporate demand for profit that is destroying ecologies and communities around the world, and maintaining a hugely fucked up system of food production and distribution. We need to act in solidarity with social movements of small scale producers and farmers around the world who are fighting for 'food sovereignty' – the ability to feed their own communities as

they wish to, rather than being forced to grow monocultures for export. We need to realise that our current lifestyles and how we eat and produce are damaging to us and are propelling us towards climate chaos and ecological crisis.

Food is one issue where we can really see the effects of the capitalist system from the individual to the global level, and where there is huge potential for resistance and the creation of alternatives.

Picture books

The theme for this issue is radical illustration, and it got me reminiscing of the books I loved as a child. It was often the illustration that clinched it for me. The best story could be ruined by bad drawings, and imaginative, evocative and appropriate illustration would bring a book to life. These are the ones that still get me excited:

- Maurice Sendak's beautifully drawn *Where the Wild Things are* but also his other ones - I have a vague memory of something involving bears, and some really surreal story called Higgeldy Piggledy Pop! about a pig joining a stage show. *In the Night Kitchen* had a boy flying over a city nightscape and prancing about naked, which apparently caused a lot of controversy and is still banned in a few American states.

- *Pippi Longstocking* with its crazy protagonist who was the strongest girl in the world, and its scratchy ink illustrations that depicted her living in her ramshackle punk as fuck wooden house. In the German culture I grew up in, Pippi has been appropriated by the anarchists as a symbol of freedom and resistance.

- *The Phantom Tollbooth* with its imaginative and slightly disturbing story and kinda eerie rushed ink drawings

– and of course, best of all – a map on the inside front cover. Those were the best kinds of books, the ones with maps of imaginary places in the inside front cover. I would spend hours designing my own.

- The *Narnia* books as illustrated by Pauline Byars are perfect. Her drawings are delicate and decorative, with lots of fine detail – her drawing of the faun made me fall in love with Mr Tumnus (but only a bit, and look, I was 8 years old!). So the books are kinda racist (not unlike *Lord of the Rings*, or *Pippi Longstocking*, or many other books that are of another, much more racist time) and those kids are totally twee, but the story is still completely engrossing.

- I used to love the *Babar the Elephant* books, which have also got gorgeous, simply painted illustration, until I realised as an adult that the story is just plain dodgy! An elephant goes to Paris then goes back to Africa and brings with him his new, civilised ideas, and makes the wild elephants wear suits and installs government. Scumbag!

- *Barbapapa* is much better. Just check it out. Shapeshifters rule. ☺

Check out my comic website, it's all done too now:

www.morgenmuffel.co.uk

Things I'm currently obsessed with: making the perfect icing, dams (I've just been reading *Endgame* Vol. 1 and 2 by Derrick Jensen and he's really obsessed with blowing them up - I very much recommend the books), the soundtrack for *'The Life Aquatic'*, Weakerthans' *'Reunion Tour'*, Envy, www.xkcd.com webcomic, baking, lolcats (yes, I am ashamed to admit).

Chat until the glowing coals fade

by: Mikey D

Wikipedia (that infinite source of wisdom in this modern day and age) defines 'Seasonal Affective Disorder' or 'S.A.D.' as "a mood disorder. Most SAD sufferers experience normal mental health throughout most of the year, but experience depressive symptoms in the winter or summer". Otherwise known as 'Winter Depression', S.A.D. is often related to lack of sunlight during the winter months and can make one feel particularly sad, miserable, unenergetic and unenthusiastic about, well, nearly everything.

I've known for a while that I get particularly unhappy during the winter months. Being a very 'up and down' person when it comes to mood anyway, in winter I often find myself becoming unhappy, isolated and withdrawn, with my mood often quickly changing from being pretty happy and content to suddenly feeling unconfident and miserable for no logical reason. I do sometimes enjoy a walk out when it's incredibly cold, with my breath hanging in the air and the sky a bright blue or off-white grey with the sun streaming in and occasionally blinding me, encased within my headphone as either Neurosis or Cult of Luna blast my ear drums into a melancholy haze, but this will often fade very quickly into a more depressive mind-set which often lingers for longer than I'd like! This is especially the case when it rains for days on end, a clear sky seems like a distant memory and the wind batters you constantly, making going outside except for the most basic essentials a real chore. However, at this point it should be noted that my Swedish housemate informs me that in northern Sweden there is a town which experiences 28 minutes of sunlight in December. The rest of that time is filled with a dark, grey void. I'm starting to understand why those Acursed and Martydod records



are so incredibly bleak now! One of the things about this seasonal disorder is that it can often feel very isolating, yet it only takes a few talks to some close friends to know that nearly everyone feels unhappier in the winter, and so I think one of the best ways to overcome it is to socialise, support and ask for support in and amongst a close group of trust worthy friends. It's quite something to overcome your own unhappiness whilst at the same time helping your friends through a tough time as well.

Probably the best way to beat the 'winter blues' in my opinion is to organise and partake in as many potlucks as possible. Potlucks are a phenomenon which for some reason hasn't taken off that much in the UK (please contact me and correct me if I'm wrong on this!), yet other international punk rock communities seem to take part in them all the time, primarily because they're awesome! If you've never been to one, it's simple: find somebody's house and organise a night to all go round, each taking with you a dish, tupperware container or pot of delicious vegan food to share. When there is a good 8 or 9 of you doing this, you have all the foundations for a lovely meal together and a cosy night in away from the cold and gloom outside. This winter especially I was fortunate as one of my friends had a working fire place in his living room and so we would gather together, eat until it proved difficult to move and recline in front of the fire and chat until the glowing coals faded. If we were feeling particularly energetic afterwards (a rare occurrence) the clichéd punk 80's dance party would break out into the early hours. A side note on this, the genius who came up with 'internet karaoke' needs to be applauded as these parties have just reached a new level of awesomeness.

Whilst discussing food, a note on diet must be made as previously I'd been one of the worst vegans ever during winter, gorging on nothing but carbohydrates with hardly a green vegetable in sight – no doubt leading to an iron deficiency and subsequent mood swings and lack of energy!

So make sure you have plenty of broccoli and spinach in your meals, and one neat breakfast treat I've gotten

into is having marmite or yeast extract (loaded with B12) spread on toast with either tomato or avocado on top. This with black coffee first thing in the morning is a force to be reckoned with, I can assure you!

Other things to help include trying to get some exercise (again, I fail at this usually, as the prospect of riding my bike when it's pouring with rain, or icy on the roads does not appeal at all) so I started swimming at the local pool which is a pretty good pick me up in the morning, and as it was indoors there was no need to feel at the mercy of the elements. After about a week or so it's amazing what endorphins can do for you.

I'm gonna finish this off by just writing a bit about the bands and records which got me through the winter. First of all is Neurosis' *'Given To The Rising'*, the latest album from arguably one of the most influential bands ever in the world of punk, hardcore and metal. The previous records I enjoyed by them had a more restrained and experimental edge, choosing only to unleash raging heaviness at opportune moments. On this there is no holding back, the first riff kicks in on the opening track and you feel like the sky is caving in. Whilst still retaining some of their more subdued moments from previous material, these only take on a more haunting and unsettling feeling as you prepare for the next onslaught of bludgeoning darkness. The final riff on 'Origin' has to be one of the most epic and melancholy ever, and as the distortion falls away leaving you in a stunned silence, you come to the realisation that Neurosis have yet again created another masterpiece. Stunning artwork as well.

The next two bands are Agalloch and Wolves In The Throne Room, in my opinion two of the most original metal bands I've heard in a long time, and both entrenched deeply within experimental, folk-influenced black metal. Picking albums is hard, but *'2 Hunters'* by Wolves..., with its incredible use of yearning melody, terrifying walls of sound, field recordings of woods and bird song and screeching vocals is one of the most engrossing albums I've heard in a long time. Best enjoyed in one

long sitting, the simultaneous feeling of both joy and sadness it conveys is quite something, and the band's opinions on the state of the world, black metal and why supporting the ELF is a good idea makes them far more interesting than most 'grim' metal out there. Meanwhile, Agalloch's *'Ashes Against The Grain'* has a slower and arguably calmer feel, eschewing blastbeats in favour of more mid-paced and slower rhythms, but still containing an incredibly bleak atmosphere and unmistakably 'blackened' vocals. Long introspective songs, with plenty of post-rock and folk influences creating some truly incredible and moving guitar parts makes this a perfect compliment to Wolves... work. Both records are a document of the beautiful and consuming wonder of nature, whilst reminding us of the destructive horrors of mankind and the industrialised world.

Finally, the glorious hardcore explosions on *'Abyssal'* the new EP from Japanese epic hardcore/post-rock masters Envy has been probably the most uplifting record I've listened to this winter. Opening with a 10 minute epic which when witnessing them live in November moved me to tears (and I have to stop myself now when listening to it), two tracks which would sit more in the *'A Dead Sinking Story...'*-era and an instrumental, this may not seem like much value for money, but the quality of music and the fact it's fucking Envy makes it more than worthwhile.

I actually can't really accurately describe how much I love this band. Probably the most incredibly beautiful hardcore music on the planet, this is the perfect music to enjoy long walks to, preferably down by a wind-swept seafront and this is just one of those bands that give you a bit of hope and make you start loving life again.

A fitting end I think as I can see spring slowly creep in as the days start to get longer and warmer, until next year I guess then...

Mikey - PhatMikeyD@hotmail.com



REC-ORDS

Send records for review to: Last Hours, Po Box 382, 456 - 458 The Strand, London, WC2R 0DZ

Attention (again!) review fans!

As promised the review section has changed. Again it's probably only temporary. Regardless, we now have a series of longer CD reviews. They were pulled out either because the review was interesting or because the CD was incredible, just because a CD wasn't pulled out though doesn't mean it's not incredible. We also had some very amazing illustrations done for the section too. Elsewhere in the reviews things remain much the same, zines, comics, books and the rest all got reviewed, and Andrew Culture is interviewed on p. 113.

Reviews are done by:

Alice scum - allyscum@hotmail.com
Chris (12oh5) - slowergherkin@hotmail.com
Chris Lever - lipglosszine@hotmail.com
Edd - edd@rnzine.co.uk
Greg - confrontandresist@hotmail.com
ltch - thekingblues@yahoo.co.uk
Jas - jas@pmzine.co.uk
PJ - jonshepherd13@hotmail.com
Mikey D - phatmikeyd@hotmail.com
Natalie - natalie@rnzine.co.uk
Jon @ - jon@activedistribution.org
Tim - thehostsepia@hotmail.com
Vince - vince.red@googlemail.com

p.s. Any label PR people just add info@rnzine.co.uk to your mailing list - you won't endear yourself to any of us by spamming us all!

Anti-Flag, and I expected them to be some kind of poppy punk thing in the same vein. Nope. They are heavier than that, and the guitars are a bit more prominent. The album chugs, whines and thuds along at a fair old pace and drops you straight into the middle of it with opener 'Resonate'.

I was surprised to read that the band has only been together six months, as this release is out on Deck Cheese Records, and they have already toured with A Wilhelm Scream. However, I wasn't so surprised to find out the members have come from other bands, as the music is so tight already - when title track 'The Brink' gets into its stride it's catchy and relentless.

All Idols Fall have a ton of energy, and although I have to admit this EP wasn't quite my cup of tea, it's probably worth a listen for fans of bands like Rise Against and Strike Anywhere. (Jas)

Deck Cheese Records - www.myspace.com/allidolsfall

500 Miles to Memphis Sunshine in a Shotglass

I always like being surprised by bands. I thought I had these guys pegged as just being another 'country punk' band. Which of course they are but they're so much more than that. It's alcohol as personal exploration and music as catharsis. Musically it's a relatively traditional four piece punk band with the addition of a steel guitar and fiddle players. It's a subversion, or synthesis of style, but without falling into any of the usual country punk clichés. (edd)

Deep Elm Records

All Idols Fall Standing On The Brink

At the time of writing, this lot are on tour with

Andrew Jackson Jihad/ Ghost Mice Split CD

This is - possibly embarrassingly to admit - my first real encounter with Andrew Jackson Jihad. They don't disappoint! Completely unhinged folk-punk from Phoenix with what I think is an upright bass and guitar. Actually the lyrics might be even more off kilter than the music, 'Let us get murdered' being the perfect song to prove my point! The Ghost Mice side is incredible - as I had expected. Starting with 'Oh me, oh me', a truly beautiful song, they run through dungeons and dragons, how awesome friends are, childhood adventures and a couple of songs about relationships and family. (edd)

Plan-It-X Records

Ambitions

Stranger

Ambitions feature ex-members of With Honor and although this record is supposedly influenced by Albert Camus, the dead French existentialist author, in reality it's just thirteen tracks of mediocre melodic hardcore a bit like Crime In Stereo just not any good. Whilst the band members are obviously capable on their instruments and Jay actually has a strong voice, I found this really boring: it just seems to be devoid of any really passion or emotion. I wish I could say it is redeemed by its breathtaking insight into French existentialist thought, but there's little more tedious than feeble attempts to rescue boring music with insidious intellectual name-dropping. (Greg)
Bridge 9 records

Bad Brains

Build A Nation

One of the greatest hardcore bands to ever exist have released a new record, it's produced by Adam Yauch from the Beastie Boys, and it's fucking terrible. I wish all these old bands would stop doing reunion tours and making new records. Not because I'm cynical about their motives, it's not like it's actually possible to make mega bucks off hardcore, but because it's just disappointing. I'd rather just listen to the records from the heyday of hardcore, and cry about the fact that I missed out on it the first time around. (Greg)
Megaforce records

Black Strobe

Burn Your Own Church

Upon reading that Black Strobe successfully fuse "the worlds of dance and rock music", I was quite excited that this could be a good record. How wrong I was! I don't think there is anything good about it. From the first grating electronic buzzes, to when the singer's droning voice kicks in on song two, it makes me want to tear my ears off and feed them to the mice in my kitchen.

Perhaps that is a little harsh. But the singer's voice gives the songs a chant-like quality, which drones into your head and lingers there. And not in a good way.

(Un)fortunately the CD started skipping around halfway through (at least I think it did, that could have been on purpose), and I could take no more. But hey, they know people who know Bloc Party and Nine Inch Nails or something, and apparently the NME like them, so who cares what I think?! (Jas)
Playlouderrecordings - www.blackstrobe.net/

Clay Pigeon

Self Titled EP

After being seriously impressed by seeing this band at the March Last Hours Live show at the Cross Kings, I gave their 7 track EP a listen and was similarly enthralled. Playing a really nice mix of hip hop, ska, punk, reggae and dub, this band has a lot going for them. The guitar parts are really tight and there's some awesome insane beat box shit going on in there that I'll never quite understand. The vocals are also really varied in that they go from rapping, to beat boxing, to screaming to singing. The music itself changes frequently

as well from heavy breaks to slick ska and reggae that makes you want to dance. If I had to compare this band to others I guess I'd have to say it has bits of Capdown, bits of Five Knuckle and bits of Antimaniac. The lyrics are usually political in some way but I have to confess that at times they rap so damn fast I can't understand what they're saying. Is it in English? Who knows? Who cares, this CD is awesome, especially when you consider that these guys are still at school. (PJ)

Genin Records

Cloak/ dagger

We are

In the spirit of the album let's keep this fast and to the point: Incredible! Actually scrap that: fucking incredible! The album is fast, raw punk rock. You can hear the influence from bands like Black Flag or the Circle Jerks; though maybe that's too easy. Made up of ex-members of American Nightmare, Count me Out and Trial by Fire, but that doesn't really tell you anything about how good this album is. Actually it's closer in spirit to what bands like Fucked Up, or the Ringers are playing. Straight up, incredible, raw punk rock. You should buy this album. (edd)

Reflections Records

Cock Sparrer

Here we Stand CD

In some ways this is just what you'd expect from Cock Sparrer, tuneful simple pub punk for skinheads and the loike. Some of the lyrics reflect the ageing nature of the band and indeed a more mature reflective one but others are lazy lyrics of no consequence. Not bad but not as entertaining as their classics. Comes in a standard CD case with a lyric booklet. (Jon @)

Captain Oi

Cold Ones

S/t 7"

Another cool hardcore band out of Liverpool. Playing straight forward hardcore punk, but with a good dose of humour and without any of that tough guy stuff you sometimes see. Worth checking out either live or this 7". (edd)

Ghost City Records - www.coldones.co.uk

CourseOverGround

CourseOverGround

I love it when things come out of Eastern Europe, as my music seems to be saturated with British and American music. This probably meant I gave a little more time to COG than I otherwise would have. They are a noise band, with drums dominating and punctuating throughout the songs and guitars distorting somewhere behind. '101' starts with just drums and bass and the minimalist intro definitely strikes a chord with me.

Being a bit of a word nerd, I like to understand the meanings of songs, but I also wish bands would sing in their own language. So many European bands come here and sing to us with American accents, and I just wonder what the point is. Unfortunately that's one of the flaws I find with this album. However if that doesn't bother you, then this is an album to listen to on its musical credits. (Jas)

Moonlee Records



Chief

Provocation of the Nation

Five cheeky lads from Liverpool set out to emulate the finest bands of the melodic hardcore punk genre with this debut album. Okay, so it might pinch all the best bits of bands like Strike Anywhere, Propagandhi and Rise Against, but seeing as those bands are amongst my absolute favourites I am definitely not complaining. If perchance you are not familiar with the formula for this style, it goes something like: soaring guitar riffs, lots of shout along 'woaaaaahhoos' and 'oi, oi, oi's', fancy fingerwork, politically inspired lyrics and it's, well, it's fast. While there are quite a lot of bands doing fairly similar stuff, I find it really refreshing to see an English band doing something I had started to think of as something of an American style. I saw them a while ago supporting Bridge to Solace and their energy pissed all over the bit-too-serious Euro hardcore kids and I think they could give bands like Set Your Goals a serious run for their money. In this album they tackle some really topical issues including the government's shoot to kill policy. The song 'Shoot to Kill' also happens to be the best track on the album, a perfect combination of melodies and youthful hostility. Another example of the band using gang vocals to great effect is in the song 'Count Me In'. This album is a fusion of pent up aggression, provocative song writing and some of the finest talent in the UK punk scene. You could do a lot worse than spend your gold coins on it. (12oh5)

Total Sell-out Records

Deal With It

World Coming Down

This is the cd version of Deal With It's latest 7" on Dead and Gone, it features both the new 7" tracks and the tracks from their 2006 demo. Musically the band are still playing harsh New York style hardcore, like Breakdown or Judge. Their newer songs are slower and seem to have lost some of the urgency of the demo but the sound is darker and more broody. They've also brought in the odd Integrity style solo which really adds to their sound. Mike's lyrics are still as spiteful as ever and he even does some James Hetfield-esque singing in a couple of lines, make of that what you will. Apparently the stuff they've been working on lately is gonna sound like Alpha Omega era Cro-Mags, I literally cannot wait. (Greg)

Dead & Gone Records



The Casualties

Made In N.Y.C. CD/DVD

You must have heard of the Casualties. They've been going 15 years but have been playing more commercial audiences in the last few years playing things like the Warped Tour. The Casualties are not thinking men's punk. It's raw, passionate and fast as fuck. There are "political" lyrics but they're quite basic. But don't get me wrong, sometimes "We're the fucking punks/ we're few but we are real," is what you want to hear.

This CD/DVD set is essential for any Casualties fans. The CD is a recording of their live show in 2007 when they played their native NY, the DVD is a video of the show interspersed with mini interviews, clips from their early shows and Jorge going around punk Meccas like CBGBs and Tompkins Sq Park. The best part is when they let a 14 year old from the audience play guitar on 'For the Punx'. The surprise when he plays it perfectly and at breakneck speed is priceless.

The thing that struck me is that even though the Casualties have a huge hardcore following, a lot of the audience were quite young, leading me to think the Warped Tour connection is doing them some favours. The again some of the interviews with Jorge showed him a little out of touch with the New York scene and a few of the crusty hardcore moments seemed a little staged. Overall though this release is one of the best from them. (Vince)

Side One Dummy

Dear Tonight

We're not men

From Brooklyn, New York Dear Tonight seem to quite perfectly encapsulate all that is good about punk music. The band sound like they're about to explode, and actually by the looks of things they have, with their myspace page proclaiming them dead. Still they managed to capture some of that perfect fiery passion on this their debut album. There's a bunch of bands that they've clearly taken influence from, but it doesn't matter, they stand in their own right. With vibrant angular melody, sing alongs, gang vocals, and driving instruments these guys simply play ingenious, well crafted

punk music (with just the right touch of early 90s emo). Not only that they also have smart obsessive lyrics about politics and socio-economics. I just wish I'd had a chance to see them live. (edd)

Red Leader Records – www.redleaderrecords.com

Death Before Dishonor

Count Me In

Another Death Before Dishonor record that comes with a press sheet saying how they aren't just another tough guy band, well actually, that's just not true though is it Bridge Nine? Count Me In is more songs of typical, formulaic chuggy hardcore with lyrics about seemingly nothing. They also manage to systematically destroy 'England Belongs To Me' by Cocksparrer along the way just to rub in how annoying it is that they exist. (Greg)

Bridge Nine

Demented Are Go

In Sickness and In Health CD

Demented Are Aresholes would be a better name. This lot came out of the South Wales punk scene with the beginning of the ultra stupid and macho Psychobilly scene. A "movement" of morons with quiffs, tattoos and little else besides an ability to turn the fun atmosphere at a punk gig into a tense bully dominated mosh pit. Fuck I hated it when they turned up at Damned gigs. Still no surprise then that these knuckleheads who could do little more than cover old rock n roll numbers with less style or imagination than The Cramps were also mates with notorious Nazis Screwdriver and played in a band called The Klansmen with them. This won't bother the psychobilly morons but anyone who uses their brains should consign this lot to the dustbin where they belong. Nazi Punks Fuck Off! (Jon @)

Captain Oi

Dimitrij

Words Objects

The weird and wonderful thing about good screamo is the hints of clarity amongst the chaos. What sounds like a right old racket to most, actually sounds like perfectly formed phrases, a big noisy mess that was meant to sound like that all along. Dimitrij, a four-piece screamo gang from Austria, have delivered a debut album of great riffs, and the vocals, although mainly screamed, are interspersed with speaking and melody. As such any relentlessness is prevented and the energy is kept flowing. The stand out tracks come in right at the end, just in time to convince us to put it on again, with 'Ghosts Like Us' and 'Snakes on Paper', both with some excellent female and gang vocals and driving guitar lines and beats. 'Words Objects' is a mixed effort, but the whole collection scurries by at a wicked sweaty pace, it's an enjoyable effort to say the least. (Alice)

Noise appeal

Dirty Money

No Escaping This

Everyone seems to think that Dirty Money's vocalist Graham is a pikey, but he's a nice lad really, it's just that he's the only person, other than tramps and crusties, that's over the age of 15 and still drinks White Ace. Still it does the trick I suppose. Anyway: almost everyone that's into UK hardcore over the last couple of years will have heard of and most likely seen London's Dirty Money. Their demo seemed to make a big impact, with loads of kids going nuts for them, and their newest CD features four new tracks and has the demo tracks on it too for anyone that missed out on that. The new tracks still sound like No Warning but I think lyrically they are better with songs about vandalism, surveillance state produced paranoia and despair at this stitched up world populated by dickheads. (Greg)

Dead & Gone Records

Discharge

Hear Nothing, See Nothing, Say Nothing

Discharge spawned a genre of punk that quickly became a parody of itself when so many imaginative individuals formed bands with Dis names and played superbly bad imitations of the original. Discharge pioneered the brief, negative and repetitive lyrical style that has become almost comical in its over use but here it brings back memories of the real fear we had of the mutually assured destruction nuclear threat and all that came with it. Even Metallica couldn't match the power of Discharge's raw noise when they covered one of the tracks on this LP, Free Speech For the Dumb. This digi pack reissue looks nice and with the 9 extra tracks (inc Never Again) is without a doubt a necessary part of any punk record collection unless you've already got them, which of course you should have! (Jon @)

Captain Oi

Don't mess with texas

Los días de junio

I worked at a record shop and a girl came in saying she had been asked to write an essay on 'Post Modern Rock'. She was holding some Mogwai and Godspeed CDs looking worried. She asked us if this was post modern rock. Without sounding glib, is not all pop music post modern? However, post-rock, like most genres, gets predictable so bands need to bring something different to the table. This second album from Croatia's finest post rock instrumentalists (You tell me I'm wrong!) is nine songs coming in at just under 40 minutes, a melancholic affair that surfs and flits about gently. Each song lulls the listener about with piano and guitar and enough melody not to be droney, but a nice sprinkling of distortion to give it some bite. It's gentle stuff with a sweet melody, and yes, a healthy enough contribution to the canon of post rock. (Alice)

Moonlee records

Etin Rise Yourself

Another new Do The Dog release, the label seems to have been furiously signing bands and releasing CDs while my back has been turned. I haven't heard of this lot before, apparently they're a four piece from Sussex, and already here they are with a full-length. They have a female vocalist, same as other recent Dog signings Dirty Revolution. Personally, I am very grateful for the recent influx of female-fronted ska and reggae bands in the male-dominated band scene, as many of the upcoming bands seem to achieve a vocal vibe the men just can't achieve.

The artwork on this is nice and colourful and rough around the edges. But getting past the packaging and onto the music these guys are really chilled out and melodic and a bit predictable because of this. But that's not necessarily a bad thing. You can stick on this CD in the background and it will just flow over you. I'm not too sure about the production, though. It seems okay but it just seems a bit 'fuzzy' in places for my liking.

Overall, though, this is a really sound debut CD and the band has definitely already found its sound. With their trad influence, it's always good to hear new bands that aren't afraid to base their music on older stuff. (Jas)

Do The Dog Music

The Fallout Dismantlement

The Fallout's music is fast, tight and at times catchy. It's standard middle ground punk rock leaning towards UK '77. The thing that I really can't get on with is the vocals. There's no screaming, shouting or even melodic singing. It's somewhere between talking and singing. To be harsh it sounds a bit like someone's dad. The lyrics are conscious and political but it's well treaded ground and lacks originality in my eyes. It's a little underpowered and the vocals really mar it for me. I'd give these guys a miss. (Vince)

Insurgence Records

The Flatliners The Great Awake

Hailing from near Toronto, Canada, The Flatliners play a well produced blend of several styles: punk rock, an occasional bit of reggae, all fuelled with a good dose of melodic hardcore. Overall, I would say the 12 tracks on this album have some nice big balls. If I had to compare them to other bands I would say they share a similar vibe to fellow label buddies The Loved Ones, but with a heavier and more aggressive sound (that perhaps sounds like a cross between The Loved Ones and Comeback Kid) and more subtly political lyrics. I say subtly as the lyrics are well written and could be interpreted in a number of ways. The vocals are strong and scratchy but melodic at the same time. Their sound is not exceptionally original but it definitely works

LAST HOURS



Illustrations by: Steve Larder - www.stevewarder.co.uk

Fall of Efrafa Elil

Simply put this is a thing of beauty. Three songs clocking in at just over an hour; an entire movement of crust punk from Brighton's Fall of Efrafa. On the unlikely, and unhappy, chance you don't know who Fall of Efrafa are they formed in 2005 as a conceptual band based partly on the politics of Watership Down, Richard Adams' book. This is the second installment in their Warren of Snares trilogy, with Elil meaning predator, and the album an attack on the predatory nature of institutionalised religion and superstitions.

Opener 'Beyond the Veil' builds from a single note melody into a roaring tome that aims its guns at the failed theologies and fables of christianity: 'Bloated apes feign ignorance/ Gilded cloth to hide our roots'. The song slows through tumultuous passages and leads us into 'Dominion Theology', the most passionate of the three songs, attacking the radical christianity of North America that seeks to subjugate all those who don't believe in their myths. The final song 'For El Ahrairah to Cry' is the most closely linked to Watership Down, the song being about how the Owsla (warren soldiers) abandon Frith (their god).

Musically the songs are constructed on relatively simple constructs, but when added all together create a grand, beautiful, haunting sound that can only be described as epic. Remarkable. (edd)
www.fallofefrafa.com

and I think this is a kick ass album, especially when you consider that the average age of the band is 19. (PJ)
Fat Wreck Chords

Hateful Monday Half a World Away

This is the 3rd full length album from this band and I dare say it's their best. This band does have a special place in my heart being, in my opinion, one of the best band from my hometown, Geneva, but that doesn't change the fact that this album has everything going for it. It's melodic, energetic, well recorded

and produced and you can really tell that the songs have been carefully crafted and not just thrown together. Lyrically this album is tight too. Political in parts, and relevant to life in others, they've done well for a band whose mother tongue is French. The melodies are catchy, but some of the songs are still really ballsy and just sound like good old fashioned punk rock. The harmonies are really well executed and I especially like guitarist Greg's screamy but tuneful voice. The other thing I like about this album is that they've made really good use of having two guitars. Nothing pisses me off more than to listen to a band with two



Lemuria First Collection

This collection shouldn't be nearly as wonderful as it is. In fact it may just be the best album I've heard in the past six months. From Buffalo, New York, this trio have been together since 2004, releasing a series of splits along the way with the likes of The Ergs, Kind of Like Spitting and Frame. This collection brings us up to date with most of their music till 2007 (though is missing the beautiful songs off The Ergs split). Being honest though if I hadn't known this was a series of early releases I wouldn't have guessed, the songs work together and flow into one another – both lyrically and musically – almost perfectly.

The opening song 'Hours' leads us faultlessly into the world of Lemuria, a keen off-angle drum and jangling guitar make way for lyrics about the early phases of a relationship where it's impossibly painful to get up out of bed and leave the other partner lying there. It's a beautifully understood moment, and Lemuria run through it in just over a minute evoking the anguish of the speed that these early moments steam past.

The collection moves quickly on, through 'Lick Your Lips' about openness and secrecy in lyrics; and 'Bugbear' a song on the removal of an individual's metaphorical siamese twin, and what happens to that other part of the personality when it's removed.

The surprise hit for me was 'Bristles and Whiskers', the sixth track. A subtle sleeping beast of a song that I took to be about familial repression, and the homophobia inherent in marriage and religion. It has possibly the best lyrics I've ever heard, purely for their visceral horror juxtaposed by Sheena Ozzella's melodic voice: *"They don't make love they fuck / and he assumes that's enough"*.

The rest of the collection is full of other songs about sexuality, relationship angst and adult trepidation. Musically the songs are rooted in the 90s indie-pop era of Jawbox or Jawbreaker if that's at all relevant. I'm not sure it is, these guys just write wonderful songs that are underpinned by Sheena's harmonies, and Alex's laconic vocals. Simply put, it's wonderful. (edd)

Yo-Yo Records – www.yoyorecords.de

Lemuria – www.myspace.com/lemuria

Lemuria have their debut album, *Get Better*, out now on Asian Man Records

guitarists, only to hear them play exactly the same thing. The guitar parts always differ and harmonise on this CD. Lastly, you should get this CD because it has an awesome cover of classic cheesy pop tune "Maniac" (originally by Michael Sembello). I basically can't fault this CD. (PJ)

GPS Production/Kicking Records

Hot Damn!

Hot Damn!

Take a few musicians from Brighton and add bad jumpers, samples, sarcastic humour and a home studio and you are somewhere on the way to understanding the process that created Hot Damn!'s first release. I was asked not to review this because I'm totally biased, but no-one else at the zine could get their mitts on it in time, so apologies. The CD comes in handmade packaging consisting of lots of weird dotted faces. I think it took a lot of time to make. It was recorded at the new(ish) 'At Home' studios in Brighton, which is, as it sounds, someone's living room. For a living room record, or any record, it sounds great. It is vocal-less poppy rock with keyboards and samples. It starts slowish and builds up to something of a crescendo. I wanted to write 'roaring crescendo' but that might be a bit strong. I don't listen to that many bands without vocalists and it doesn't sound like any of the ones I do know (Explosions in the Sky, Mogwai, etc.) however, I'm sure they have drawn influence from these artists. Well, I'm not sure, that's a total guess. So, in conclusion, this review doesn't really tell you anything except that it is a record, made at home, self-released, consisting of samples, but no vocals and it comes from Brighton. It is also cheap. And really fucking good! If they hadn't written an absolute load of nonsense like, "they're a 'very instrumental' rock band from Brighton, they're the sound that would be created if Will Young and Gareth Gates had, instead of voices, such instruments as drums, guitars and synthesizers coded into their vocal chords and had a rap battle across two sides of a very large lido" on their website this review would be infinitely better. Fact. (12oh5)

At Home - <http://730club.googlepages.com>

Johnny Foreigner Arcs Across the City

Okay, this type of music (which I guess would be described as some sort of lo-fi pop indie) isn't usually my thing but I'll try and give it an objective review. The first thing I noticed about this CD was that the singer's voice is kind of whiny and a bit annoying. However, the girl's voice is way better in that she can sing well as well as scream. This Birmingham trio's music is kind of crazy and noisy and has some really interesting rhythms. And although it is noisy, it doesn't lack song structures and actual melodies, like I find a lot of "noise rock" does. There was no lyric sheet so I really have no idea what they're singing about. There's also quite a bit of energy in their songs, and there are never really any breakdowns in the music

(except in the last song), so that energy is pretty constant. Not bad for Birmingham. (PJ)
Best Before Records

Laibach

Nova Akropola CD

Laibach! Love 'em! Why? Because they push boundaries, make me think, and sometimes their music - or noise - is so seductive too. Someone explained Laibach thus, "Laibach's method is extremely simple, effective and horribly open to misinterpretation. First of all, they absorb the mannerisms of the enemy, adopting all the seductive trappings and symbols of state power, and then they exaggerate everything to the edge of parody". This CD was their second release back in '85 and finds them still in seriously heavy experimental mode, foot-tapping it ain't but atmospheric, disturbing and challenging it is. I wonder if Cherry Red are gonna do the rest too, and why not rerelease the first LP first? This comes in a digi pack that says it is enhanced with an extra promo video (Drzava) shame there isn't more about the band and album included. (Jon @)
Cherry Red

Lights Out

Out! Out! Out! 7"

These guys come from Stuttgart in South Germany and play a scuzzy lo-fi brand of punk. They play angry songs in a nice up-beat tempo, and would be pretty excellent to see live. To be honest though the 7" didn't do that much for me; it just felt a little bit middle of the road. (edd)
Yo-Yo Records

Love and a .45

Too Blonde for you EP

A straight up power punk rock EP from London based Love and a .45. It's enjoyable stuff, though I can see that the So-Cal influences might grate after a little while. Still it's not a bad EP; it ticks all the right boxes: fast paced guitar, chunky bass and melodic female vocals (with some synth occasionally thrown in for good measure!). (edd)
Cheapshock Records

The Lurkers

Fullham Fallout

The Lurkers were around at the beginning of the punk rock phenomenon, back in '76 they played with the Pistols at the 100 Club for example. 30 years on and their LP is re-released with the obligatory extra tracks making a total of 26 slices of not too bright sing along punk. They epitomise the early Punk sound. Melodic but simple tunes with lots of choral repetition suitable for the terraces. If it sounded better or was funnier I'd compare them with The Ramones but they are not worthy. The Lurkers did manage - as do most bands - to produce a couple of classics here including, "Ain't Got a Clue", "Shadow" very Ramonesesque! And the cover of "Then I Kissed Her". Comes in a colourful fold out



Illustrations by: Edd Baldry - <http://heymonkeylathours.org.uk>

Slingshot Dakota

Their dreams are dead, but ours is the golden ghost

Each song on 'Their Dreams are Dead, but ours is the Golden Ghost', the second album from this keys and drums girl/boy Brooklyn duo, is mixtape gold. They create gorgeous indie pop blasts which shout about love, friendship, travelling and imagination. Singer and keyboard player Carly Comando's lyrics are so resolutely positive in tone it makes you want to hold hands with people and cheer, or call friends in far off places just to say hey. "So let's follow our hearts and make something of ourselves/ Yeah! /... and it will be alright" she calls on opening track 'The Golden Ghost' with such a passion and force, it is as if she feels that unless she gets these words out soon she's going to spontaneously combust.

To give you an idea of where they're coming from, Slingshot Dakota are a forever touring band who play in basements and have a 'Contribute to the Van Fund' option on their website. They are here for love of creativity and communication. The juxtaposition of melodic keys and crashing drums fits Slingshot Dakota's bittersweet lyrical quality perfectly, being both tender and tough. The album is steeped in sentimentality and even in their melancholy moments, the lyrics are steadfastly trying to find the good, such as on "1-78" or "Until The Day I Die, Part 2": "I know it's not easy/ but we can try/ We can try/ I'm going to love you til the day I die". Here is a band fighting the good fight. (Alice)
Self-released - www.slingshotdakota.net

digipack with lyric booklet and band history. So if you like the early punk stuff, brawn with tunes, this is for you! (Jon @)
Captain Oi

The Menzingers

A Lesson In The Abuse of Information Technology

Wow, will Go-Kart Records never cease to be a record-releasing machine? I remember a couple of years ago, when they had me on their books to review, and it seemed every couple of weeks there would be a record or two through my letterbox.

Anyway, the title of this album gripped me. In a way, I wish it was a book instead of a CD as I wouldn't mind reading it. Track one is a frantic political ode to the war; messy and punk rock until its 2:16 conclusion. Track two, 'Sir Yes Sir', starts with gang vocals, and already I am in love with this CD before the song trips into an off-beat verse. They are a bit like Against Me! in their more epic moments.

Sloppy punk lead vocals with melodic backup just adds to the charm, but makes the words quite hard to make out in places. The lyrics are pretty abstract and only half-explanatory, so it's a good job they have written the songs



Speeding Bee Tyranny With A Difference

This is the first album-proper from home grown ska-punk trio Speeding Bee. Hailing from Pity Me, County Durham, this band have been stalwarts of the North East scene for as long as I can remember, putting on many an all-ages show, the likes of which I haven't enjoyed since I was old enough to legally drink. Whilst Speeding Bee have already released a DIY demo of sorts, this record benefits, not only from its polished studio treatment, but from years of fine-tuning their repertoire on the road; through incessant gigging, and audience participation. As a result there are many cameo appearances from friends and extended band families giving the overall impression that it was as much fun to record, as it is to listen to. Playfully describing their distinctive style as 'music that Steve Albini would secretly listen to' you too would be forgiven, even in today's somewhat ska-hostile climate, for adding this record to your own list of guilty pleasures.

Whilst the ska is pervasive, it is toe-tapping for sure, and on many of the tracks, the driving hooks and catchy melodies loom so largely in the foreground you no longer care for ascertaining the ska from the punk in the melee. In a scene where co-option of the tired-rhetoric and aesthetic of post-1977 punk still proves as alluring as it was in its heyday, you cannot help but feel Speeding Bee have been more influenced by Naomi Klein's 'No Logo' than the dissonant echoes of John Lydon's 'No Future!' Encroaching on topics as diverse as globalisation, power-relations, anomie and apathy, their lyrics are so intelligently sharp, you know they've been 'made for cutting,' and are noticeably, more inspired by the likes of Foucault, Hardt, and Negri, than anything Tim Armstrong has ever done to 'fuck the system!' Then again, perhaps it's inevitable when you've been raised with a photo of Billy Bragg holding you as a bairn, or get the chance to be his mid-gig tea caddy, as two of the trio would undoubtedly attest.

To this end, I urge you to instead imagine a ska band born more out of a mutual appreciation of J-Church, Big Black, and Dillinger Four, than the whimsical waves offered by the likes of Reel Big Fish. Stand out tracks, in my opinion, include 'Bucks Fizz,' 'Look Out! He's Tossed Him Clean,' 'The Suburbs Dream of Violence' (with its backing-gang vocals), and the insurrectionary anthem 'James Andrews Must Die,' though they're all equal candidates when I'm singing in the shower. Here's to hoping this band make Pity Me as infamous as Leatherface's Rhyope! To this end, giving Speeding Bee a little more, well-deserved appreciation outside of the North-East of England, wouldn't be a bad place for any ska and/or punk fan to start. (Chris Lipgloss)

www.myspace.com/speedingbee

in full in the liner notes to let the listener fully contemplate them. Just as I think I have the band pegged as loud and fast, they surprise me again with track five, 'Coal City Blues', a melancholy acoustic offering more reminiscent of the folk-punk of state buddies Mischief Brew.

If you want to try out some fresh, enthusiastic, melodic punk I would recommend A Lesson In The Abuse of Information Technology. (Jas) Go-Kart Records - www.themenzingers.com

Mike Scott Massacre Songs

This is the least uplifting album I have heard in ages. It is definitely not post break up music, I'm warning you! Don't say I didn't warn you. I don't know what the guy is so depressed about, didn't he just get married? Maybe it should be called Masochistic Songs? Anyway, so once I got past the urge to leap out of my bedroom window I actually started to like this record, although I am not allowed to listen to it unless I'm in a good mood to begin with, otherwise it just brings me down. The guy, Mike Scott, was in the band Phinius Gage, but don't let that bear any influence on your opinion because there is really nothing similar about them. Although the best track on the album turns out to be a Phinius Gage song he has reworked as a solo track. It's called Provocation Song and it makes fun of rich kids turned anarchists and their over zealous ideologies. It is very amusing.

Your appreciation of this album will definitely rest upon whether you like Mike's voice. It is slightly flat and he has a very strong Southern English accent with limited tonal variation. It can grate slightly, but I definitely found it growing on me. He demonstrates his finest song writing in Jamie Song, which features haunting female backing vocals, soft guitar melodies and poignant lyrics. The album has some beautiful piano interludes which really lift it up and tie it together. I think a few years ago I would have liked this album a lot more, but right now there seems to be a slight over saturation in the folk-punk-political-ex-member of such and such band-solo artist genre. While the existence of many DIY artists is certainly no bad thing, it just takes a bit more to impress me these days. That being said, it makes great listening on a sad winter evening when you're sitting with a cup of tea and it's snowing outside. (12oh5)

No Division Records / Fond of Life Records - www.fondoflife.net

The Mock Heroic Dignified exits

Any band who write an 'explanation' to each of the lyrics and songs in the liner notes are obviously very keen to portray themselves as a band with something relevant to say. For an example, the explanation of 'An Open Wound' waffles on for approximately 100 words, concluding, "The main consequence

of suffering this alienation seems to be a general devaluation of life". Right on, and this was one of the less obscure and mysterious explanations, which continues for longer than the lyric itself (personal favourite: "We build walls by mimicking each other and recycling history. Progression needn't mean pretense (sic)". Say what?). The Mock Heroic obviously fancy themselves as the thinking person's screamo band, which will either be lapped up or discarded as pretentious toss depending on your point of view. Musically, 'Dignified Exits' is a violent spazzy mess of rhythm, riffs and screaming. One for the scratchy-beard brigade. (Alice)

Superfi

My Rules

Am I Moron? 7"

From Portugal these guys play '77 punk but with a nice melodic edge; they remind me a bit of the Dead Kennedys. Arguably their lyrics are a little simplistic, 'It's not a movie, it's reality/ Bombs from the air, dropped just to kill' for example. Still, I guess they make the point, and it's difficult to disagree with the ideas behind the lyrics. (edd)

We love Pandas - www.welovepandas.com

Off With Their Heads

All Things Move Towards Their End

This 14 track CD is a collection of 7"s and splits and stuff that Off With Their Heads released between 2003 and 2006. Having only ever heard a couple of tracks from this band, I wasn't too sure what to expect. Basically, this CD is a rough, quite lo-fi recording of catchy and upbeat yet completely depressing songs about love about drugs and how the two don't always mix so well. It's not especially fast or varied and I personally don't find this sound to be anything that original, but this is definitely a fun band that I could see myself dancing to at one of their shows if I was drunk enough. The depressing lyrics are actually pretty good in that they really feel very genuine. (PJ)

No Idea Records

The Out Circuit

Pierce the empire with a sound

The Out Circuit is the brainchild of one Nathan Burke, alongside various collaborators, with Teppei Teranishi of Thrice (although that is misleading as The Out Circuit is nothing like said band) behind the desk. This is a world where bands are called 'projects' and songs are 'soundscapes'. Together, they have created 10 big dreamy songs, largely whimsical instrumental pieces, which reassuringly don't rely too much on the loud-quiet-loud formula that is so very easy to fall into. Indeed, the album is mostly just quiet and abstract, rounding off with a near 7 minute piece entitled 'Scarlet' which flows softly with drums and hums of keys and guitar effects, finishing with the faint sound of the bizarre garbles of a small child. 'Pierce the Empire with a Sound' is chilled out and atmospheric, inoffensive and hushed. It won't get you out of your seat, rather lull you

deep within it. (Alice)

Lujo

Pama International Love Filled Dub Band

Pama International know how to do a good job finishing an album, there's no doubt about it. This is no exception, a pleasure to listen to. Produced to an incredible standard giving the reggae-dub-ska infusion a fully rounded sound, this long-running collective pelts out a bunch of chilled out melodies. Around for a while now, Pama show no intention of slowing down on their mission to make their own great music while catalysing the UK roots reggae and dub scene into something much more exciting than it would otherwise be. This CD is released on their own label 'Rockers Revolt', sharing a name with their very own club night which has seen performers such as Aggrolites, Don Letts and Easy All-Stars.

Female vocals on 'Wherever You Lead' bring a different dimension to the sound, and as the song develops and weird sounds and reverb kicks in the CD is off to a brilliant start. Parts of 'Lovely Wife' are reminiscent of Rx Bandits dub side-project Satori who Sean has previously helped to book, but Pama are much more adventurous with weird noises to include with some 'space-age' sounding noises bouncing around.

'Highrise' is a social commentary on the state of the nation with violence on the streets, and is very real in its lyrics and really hits home. This year promises to be another exciting and active one for Pama, with a tour coming up, an appearance at Glastonbury scheduled, and a huge 'Love Music Hate Racism' event at the Koko in London, featuring Rebelation and Crunch! among many others. With a hectic schedule like that, it would be criminal not to catch the band live at some point. (Jas)

Rockers Revolt - www.pamainternational.co.uk

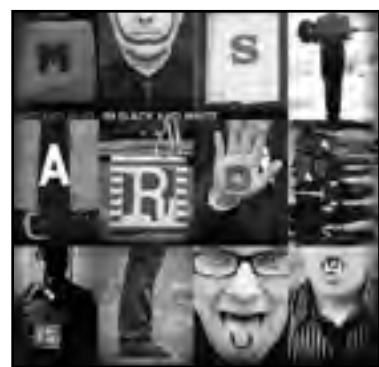
Paul Baribeau Grand Ledge

Paul Baribeau still surprises me. He apparently doesn't like to be described as 'brutally honest', but there's no way not to think that after listening to his songs. He sings about his life and all its complications: families, relationships, broken hearts, romance and loneliness. More consistently written than his debut self-titled album, this is a short - 18 minute - album that will take your breath away. (edd)

Plan-It-X Records

Piebald Accidental Gentleman

It's been about a zillion years since I heard this lads name bandied about. What have they been up to? I don't think I've even heard them since MC Lars sampled one of their songs on iGeneration.



Mustard Plug In Black And White

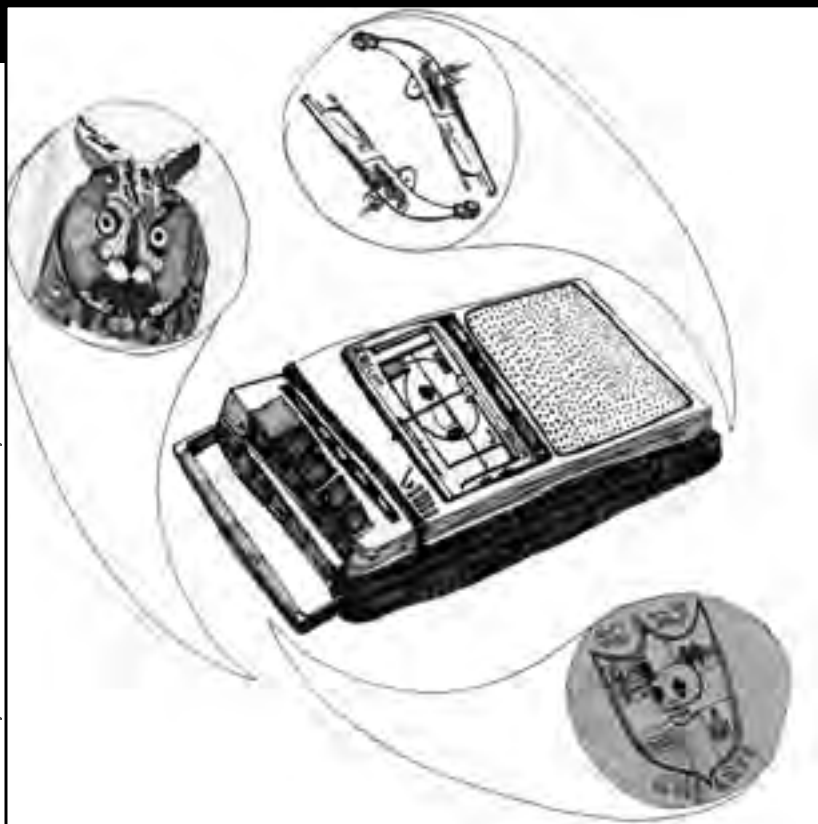
Once I got Mustard Plug's 'Pray For Mojo' for Christmas; it immediately became one of my favourites. I listened to it a lot. Then I bought 'Big Daddy Multitude' from a second hand shop and acquired 'Yellow #5' on 12". I was so happy. But one day I stopped listening to them and they just dropped off my radar.

I was so happy when this CD dropped into my lap. And they don't seem to have changed at all. I stuck them on the walkman and got an immediate spring in my step. The catchy 'Who Benefits?' kicks off proceedings, and the bouncy, horn-heavy ska-punk doesn't stop from here on in. 'Hit Me! Hit Me!' is pure third wave at its best, and if you're not ashamed to still admit liking that, this song alone is worth getting hold of the album.

Back in the day, they were one of the few bands whose message I didn't study closely, I just loved them for being catchy and tuneful. So I don't know whether their darker, even political, leanings on this CD are something new. 'Time to Wake Up' is not overt in its meanings but says "You had promised faith and compassion/ You delivered strife and aggression... The bags are coming home/ Obituaries sent".

But after this, the tone lightens again and it's back into the bouncier songs. 'You Can't Go Back' is a brilliant but weird track about not being able to go back to where you came from, clocking in at less than 50 seconds and ending as abruptly as it started. From just listening to this record, I am so glad this band has come back into my life. If you're an old-time fan of Mustard Plug, or just have a soft spot for melodic ska-punk, give this album a try. (Jas)

Hopeless Records - www.mustardplug.com



This Is A Standoff Be Excited

Zatopeks
Damn Fool Music

Let's start with **This is a Standoff**: My immediate reaction to the artwork of this CD was this was it was a Drive Thru band. Well anyone who knows who they are will probably kick me. This is a release on Household Name Records, and this lot are bits of Belvedere who have come back for another round since splitting up a couple of years ago after ten years. I was never too into Belvedere, mostly through laziness of not taking the time to listen to them. However, I think I prefer **This Is A Standoff** anyway. It is much more straight-up melodic punk, and has all the good bits from Belvedere still in tact. And the vocals, along the lines of Bad Religion or similar bands, are one of my favourite bits about this CD.

This is definitely a singalong record, and I think their live show will be the place to put this to the test. They just so happen to be touring the UK in April, so see you down the front?

There was a time when it seemed all the Household Name bands were an unchanging entity – Adequate Seven, Lightyear, Captain Everything!, Capdown etc. would always be touring and there was a HHN 'type'. Recently, however, the label seems to have undergone some changes with a lot of the older bands leaving or splitting up, and a bunch of new ones being picked up. One of these new ones is **Zatopeks**.

Despite being around for a while, releasing

previous albums and touring around Europe a lot, this is their first CD that has appeared in my possession..

First of all, it is great. On first listen, 'Daily Mail' will probably get stuck in your head, along with plenty of other catchy melodies. Being a journalism geek, the aforementioned song amused me no end when I first heard it, but it took me five or six more listens to realise part of the first song was about Anna Politkovskaya, a Russian reporter wanted dead for her work. I could barely believe it, it's like geeky journalism paradise. I'm not surprised I didn't realise the meaning earlier, though. The band seem to get the perfect mix of melody and meaning in their songs, and the meaning will just seep into your head as you listen more and more.

Other than the opinionated political and social overtones of the album is a number of other feel-good numbers. Track three hit me immediately as something that could be straight out of American Graffiti, a cheesy-but-sweet tune about cruising and falling for a girl. **Damn Fool Music** is a straight-up CD by a bunch of dudes who love pop-punk and '50s rock'n'roll and music, simple as that. And if you grew up with your parents playing the old stuff around you, chances are you will have an ingrained soft spot for this lot. (Jas)

Household Name Records
www.thisisastandoff.com
www.zatopeks.com

According to the press bumf, they have been touring America in a van powered by vegetable oil, which is somehow fitting. Anyway, if you don't know **Piebald** it's nice clean punk. You know, the kind that wouldn't be too out of place on Xfm or similar stations. This CD isn't an exception – 13 tracks of straightforward poppy-oddball noise.

According to guitarist and vocalist Travis Shettel, the recording of this CD was "haphazard", as they "are gentlemen at heart, but a bit sloppy". These admissions just add to the charm of the album.

'Strangers' has a Defiance, Ohio jangliness going on which is always endearing. 'Roll On' is a vocal-led tribute to going out and riding bikes, with some slightly disturbing child gurgling and bike noises in the middle. The entire last minute and a half is just the sound of a wheel spinning, totally messing with your head. Ultimately, **Accidental Gentleman** is full of sweet songs which aren't offensive to the ears. As 'Getting Mugged and Loving It' says "there will always be monks and monkeys". I'm not sure what it means, but I think it sums up this album. (Jas)

SideOneDummy - www.piebald.com/

The Shadowcops Ready When You Are


The Shadowcops talk about being 'rock' quite a lot in the bit of paper that came with this CD, but that's not strictly true. They sound somewhere between riff-heavy punk rock and just 'rock' to me. Amongst their influences they cite The Wildhearts, Dead Kennedys, and The Living End and I think they give you a fairly good idea of what to expect. If you like a bit of all these bands, likelihood is you'll like this five track EP.

I enjoy the chugging predictability of it until about a minute in on the first track and the guitars go a bit whiney which I don't love so much, and this seems to be the pattern for most of the CD. In 'Green Light' I can see what they were trying to do with the vocals but the levels of lead and back up means it just sounds a bit confusing to the ears. However, gang vocals on 'My My, My Personal Ennui' redresses the balance a bit. These guys have put something pretty tight together here and if you're into a bit of rock and roll in with your punk rock diet then I'd recommend giving them a listen. (Jas)

www.theshadowcops.co.uk

Squid58 Dismantled

From the name, I thought **Squid58** would be a young band. But from the first line of the first song "We first met in '81...", I knew I was wrong. A bit of research reveals, in fact, that this band features ex-frontman of ska legends The Hotknives Mick Clare on vocals. The band released this 10-track album by themselves previously, but Kev at Do The Dog has hunted



them out and re-released it, much like he did with the Howards Alias reggae spin-off Skylar. This guy definitely has an ear for talent.

Sounding like a less-frantic version of Smoke Like A Fish with chilled ska tunes, they definitely fall right into the label's style, which can't be anything but good. The songs are all stories, describing people and situations in a very real manner, and it's enjoyable to not just hear another load of over-romanticised tosh. Songs like 'Walk Away' demonstrate the total proficiency of the band, and they create an understated, minimalist sound much like the re-incarnation of APB, Do The Dog old-timers who shrank from a seven-piece to a three-piece a few years back. If you tend to like the more trad-tinged third-wave bands on the Do The Dog label, this will definitely satisfy your needs. (Jas)
Do The Dog Music - www.myspace.com/squid58

The Swing In' Class Hero Everything at 10

This is the debut album from this Geneva three piece and they have certainly started with a bang. This is well written, sing along, make you want to shake your hips, but also your fist, political punk n roll. These songs have a real bounce to them. You might say that if Johnny Cash had a punk band, The Swing In' Class Hero is what it would sound like. Each song carries a unique catchy guitar hook and there are some really slick solos to match. The bluesy bass lines do a lot of the driving when the guitar gets technical and you can always guarantee a melodic and well harmonised chorus. If you think that music these days is lacking some rock n roll then this CD is for you. I love this CD because it's just honest. These guys play music the way they like it. There's no trying to look amazing or necessarily even impress people they just play what sounds good to them, and by gum it sounds good to me too. Buy it! (PJ)
808 Records/Leech Reeda Records

Tubelord Square EP

I have a bad feeling this has been lying in my CD pile for far too long. From Kingston, south London these guys play progressive indie music, think At The Drive-In, early Coheed and Cambria or the Mars Volta. Not bad as far as it goes! (edd)
www.myspace.com/tubelord

The Usual Suspects

Breaking Bars and Crushing Codes CD
Think Strikinen DC, RDF, PAIN, and the Inner Terrestrials and you'll have a pretty good idea what this lot sound like and what they say lyrically. In fact they are probably more overtly political than any of the aforementioned bands and on the whole faster paced. The lyric sheet is a fold out poster in an uneasy to read green on black but there is plenty to read! Recommended. (Jon @)

LAST HOURS

Available from Active distribution Vogue No Vogue 7"

Vogue are a four piece band from Belgium and from what I can tell they're not too shabby. After the demise of bands like Dead Stop and Restless Youth it's awesome to get a new band playing proper early 80's hardcore from that neck of the woods. Musically the two tracks fall somewhere between a dirty Siege track and a nice fast Negative Approach song, which is just about right in my eyes. My only beef with this record is that it only has one side and two tracks on it. I'm looking forward to their LP! (Greg)
Holy Shit Industries

YIKES!

Whoa comas / blood bomb

Why settle for one title when you can have two? And, hey lets throw some silly punctuation into the band name just for good measure, in keeping with the discordant instrument and ear bashing nature of the kind of music San Fransisco's Yikes! produces. Fronted by John Dwyer, previously of The Coachwhips, Yikes! play messy, thrashing garage rock, crashing about like loons. 'Whoa Comas' or 'Blood Bomb' is an EP which should be ideal for the tetchy and short attention span of the modern world, with each song lasting no longer than two and a half minutes. Title track 'Blood Bomb' races through in just over a minute of rapid guitar and drum thumping repetition. It's lo-fi, embracing the love of hitting stuff until it sounds good, but as with many bands of this ilk (Lighting Bolt might be a good example), Yikes! are probably a dish best served live. (Alice)
Kill Shamon

Zeeb?

Starring Zeeb? As Thermal Detonator In... Gargantuan Rock Monster

I had heard of these guys but never heard them until I got this CD. It's sleazy garage rock'n'roll type stuff, and it's not entirely my cup of tea but I quite like parts of it. It doesn't take itself too seriously, and some of the lyrics are incredibly amusing. Take track two 'Da Hair Bomb', whose subject matter disturbed me so much I don't think I can even repeat it, but it was brilliant. With baptism by fire like that to Zeeb? I don't think anything else about the band could surprise me, and after that the listener can just settle down with the rest of the album. They are definitely quite weird but it works, so if "a straight ahead full fucking tilt fucking album of punk fucking rock and fucking roll" is something you like the sound of, maybe you should get amongst it. (Jas)
Comdog Records - www.zeeb.co.uk

Demos

Cutting Class S/t demo

I'm so homesick for England listening to this! I had grown accustomed to Leeds 'dad punk' bands forming left, right and centre, but Cutting Class certainly break from tradition with this awesome demo. Fast, furious, melodic hardcore punk with soaring guitar riffs and crew shouts. This has to be one of the best things to come out of Leeds in a while and it's no surprise seeing as it's a super group formed of members from Freaks Union, The Mingers, Sindromes and The Scourge of River City. Although it would be easy to sound like 'every other band' when tackling this genre, they somehow manage to avoid all the clichés while retaining the best bits of melodic hardcore style. The third track on the demo (not enough songs! More please!) is my personal favourite. It has this wicked driving beat and shout-a-longs. God bless crew shouts! The other reason why you should get your hands on this demo is the brilliant packaging. I'm a total sucker for hand made packaging and this is some of the best I have seen - a black and red screen of this old skool coffin motif with skulls and scissors. It must have been a total bitch to cut out. (12oh5)

www.myspace.com/wearecuttingclass

Little Flags S/t demo

Well, what can I say? This is near perfect posi melodic hardcore from Southampton. There's lots of awesome sing alongs, with songs about the 'scene', being sent off to war and relationships. These guys came and played the Last Hours live gig in March and they re-affirmed my faith in hardcore music. (edd)

www.myspace.com/littleflags

One Night Stand in North Dakota S/t demo

A six song demo of folk punk songs from country Durham. They're mainly about double standards of modern society with some feminism thrown in for good measure. Not the greatest production, but then that doesn't really matter. It reminds me a bit of Tim Barry's recent album. Comes with lyrics sheet and a pretty odd comic. (edd)
discounthorserecords@googlegmail.com

The Skints Down and Outer space

On the hundreth listen (or thereabouts) I finally decided that, no, this isn't better than Cap-down, but it's a pretty close run thing. Poppy punk-core with saxophone from East London, these guys have some serious talent and two awesome songs here. Brilliant saxophone, perfect guitar etc. etc. Go see them live, they're great. (edd)

www.myspace.com/theskintsuk

BOOKS & COMICS

RIOT GRRRL REPRESENTED A TRUE REBELLION
AGAINST SOCIAL NORMS AND THE
UNDERGROUND SCENE SAYS NATALIE AS SHE
REVIEWS A NEW BOOK ON THE SUBJECT

Illustration by: Leah Stewart - hello.leah@hotmail.co.uk - www.leahstewart.co.uk

Riot grrrl: Revolution girl style

Nadine Monem (Editor)
ISBN: 9781906155018/ £19.95
190 pages

"Rebel Girl, Rebel Girl, Rebel Girl you are the queen of my world" sang Bikini Kill to their eager following, each yearning, like me, to be their very own Rebel Girl. Unhappy with the status quo a small army of like-minded grrrls set about rebelling against a male dominated music scene; riot grrrl was born.

Nothing could surpass the excitement I felt upon discovering the sub-genre of riot grrrl, feeling truly connected to the music and messages within it. I was too young to appreciate riot grrrl's heydays of the early '90s, but just the aftermath and old records were enough for me. The thrill of listening to this angry, passionate female punk music was electrifying. Rather than just being on the sidelines it made me realise I could be a part of something too!

'Riot grrrl: revolution girl style' seeks to unpick the origins of the movement, its history (or herstory), and the impact on the musical and cultural scene today. Riot grrrl is typically thought of as being about female musicians in visceral, confrontational stances but it was also so much more. As the book demonstrates, riot grrrls across the United States and Europe took the opportunity to affirm a cultural identity for themselves; a new community through which they could build links of mutual support and interaction in. In many ways, after punk

was co-opted and commercialised, for a few fleeting moment, pre-Spice Girls and sanitised 'girl power', Riot Grrrl was the new punk.

Riot grrrl represented a true rebellion; against social norms, against capitalism, against patriarchy and, perhaps most importantly and most confrontational, against the existing underground scene. Fed up with being constantly sidelined and feeling that they had no real voice, riot grrrls scathingly pointed out through their songs, writing and activism how a supposedly radical scene was a microcosm for society and gender imbalance.

Through the text and images the book documents the energy and excitement behind riot grrrl, alongside the factors behind how it came about to explode as it did in the small town of Olympia, to grow over the world, as well as the cultural legacy it has left in its wake. In addition to the music of Bikini Kill, Bratmobile and Huggy Bear, to name some of the key players, zines were a driving force behind the riot grrrl movement of the 1990's. They ranged from the typical A5 hastily cut and pasted zines, frenzied rants of angry individuals, manifestos for change, to meticulously put together publications. As the book shows it was important for riot grrrls to be in control of their own media, making sure that their voices were heard in the way they wanted them to be. When the mainstream media pricked up their ears and ran stories on this burgeoning scene people were hesitant, however the double edged sword of the mainstream allowed the ideas to permeate corners around the world that they would otherwise never have reached. However, when titles like

Getting Off: Pornography and the End of Masculinity

Robert Jensen

ISBN: 978-0-89608-776-7

The topic of sexism is often ignored or not regularly suppressed in many of our everyday social situations. Many are happy to believe the women's liberation movement to have ended in 1928 when women won the right to vote (Women over the age of 30 had been able to vote since 1918 however this was changed to 21 in 1928). In 'Getting Off' Jensen illustrates a world in which women are still suffering indefensible exploitation and tribulation at the hands of a misogynistic and patriarchal dominant culture.

'Getting Off' starts by taking a critical look at the production and consumption of pornography in our society. Jensen makes the point that pornography, like all media, embeds a message in our minds that can effect how we translate thought into real life experiences. In the case of pornography this means how our desires, relationships and sexuality are formed. A troubling thought I'm sure for those of us who aspire to loving, respectful relationships.

Jensen uses scenes created by established pornography producers as case studies. These are all mainstream titles that depict hardcore sex scenes. I found myself shocked by some of what is described, not simply by the acts themselves but more so by the attitudes and dialogue of those involved. The male performers clearly see themselves as the controlling force in the on screen "relationship" and each act they perform reinforces this underlying theme. In the mean time the female is submissive to point of accepting physical pain upon her body both on and off screen. Such an imbalance of control in any other social situation would horrify most people and more than likely lead to those at the receiving end of this imbalance revolting in some form.

He then goes on to explain how everyday social roles (taught from birth) and even the concept of masculinity itself mirror this abusive power structure to create a "rape culture" in which we live.

Whilst his damning analysis of key aspects of our culture is hard to contend, at times Jensen's personal stimulus for the subject leads to several harsh pre-suppositions as well as some questionable conclusions. Despite this, the majority of the book's content is factual and well considered, putting forward a very strong argument or at worst acting as a starting point for much needed debate on the subject. (Tom Fiction)

South End Press



But the beauty of riot grrrl versus any academic labelling system was that you could live and be riot grrrl. You could participate, make friends, go see a band, express yourself and most importantly, have fun!

Illustrations by: Leah Stewart - www.leahstewart.co.uk

'USA Today' and 'Rolling Stone' were increasingly ridiculing and patronising, a media blackout was encouraged, forcing riot grrrl back underground.

The book itself is a real feast for the eyes, jam filled with images on most pages of assorted riot grrrl paraphernalia from zine covers, artwork, subvertisements, band photos and from protests. However at times the visual presentation, done to mimic a very DIY-cut-n-paste style jarred with the formal academic language that was often used by the authors. I also have to mention that for me, the decision to reference all quotes at the end of the chapter, without also saying within the text who had said what, was infuriating.

Of course one of the legacies of riot grrrl has been Ladyfests. Over the past few years they have truly mushroomed around the globe, springing up all around the UK, America, Europe, Australia and even elsewhere. Individual Ladyfests are organised by different local collectives, creating a space to

celebrate female musicians, performers, film-makers and the like. They also aim to raise awareness of important political and social justice issues. Without riot grrrl as their touchpaper, and strong networks to tap into, it's unlikely they would have spread like wildfire in the way they have.

Riot grrrl also represented a new form of feminism. For many it was accessible and relevant to their lives, in a way that second wave feminism now looked redundant. Whether Riot Grrrl and Third Wave Feminism came simultaneously together or fuelled the fires for each other is a matter up for debate, but they certainly shared many parallels; challenging notions of female sexuality, queer theory and female empowerment. But the beauty of riot grrrl versus any academic labelling system was that you could live and be riot grrrl. You could participate, make friends, go see a band, express yourself and most importantly, have fun! (Natalie)
Black Dog publishing

Artwork from: *Lost Girls* Artwork by: Melinda Gebbie Published by: Top Shelf



Lost Girls

Alan Moore & Melinda Gebbie
ISBN 1891830740/ 336 pages/ £40

Melinda Gebbie and Alan Moore’s magnum opus has finally arrived. Sixteen years in the making, plus an additional year for it to reach the UK because of copyright issues, has it been worth it? Broadly speaking yes. The book has received mixed reviews in the world of comics, not least in one of the reviews in the Comics Journal. It doesn’t seem to have been what many expected from Moore (unfairly Melinda Gebbie’s sublime artwork seems to be edited out of many of the reviews). Having said that the book has received what can only be described as standing ovations from many of the review sections of the UK broadsheets (even the arch conservatives at the Telegraph were spewing superlatives). As with *Watchmen* Alan Moore has taken a maligned genre, in this case pornography, and with the help of Melinda Gebbie, produced a work of considerable narrative weight.

Taking Alice from *Alice in Wonderland*, Dorothy from the *Wizard of Oz*, and Wendy from *Peter Pan* Alan Moore has sequestered them in an Austrian hotel in 1913. Their unfolding sexual history and experimentation unfolds over the course of the tumultuous following year through the riots that follow the Paris performance of Stravinsky’s ‘*Rite of Spring*’, the assassination of Franz Ferdinand and ultimately the outbreak of the first world war.

Within the seclusion of the hotel stories of the characters’ sexual awakening unfold with each three characters having both distinctive voices, but also different approaches to the page architecture (Alice has oval panels reminiscent of her looking glass for example). Within these stories Alan Moore is able to explore a number of intricate ideas such as

COMICS
IN BRIEF

Above and Below
James Sturm
Described as two stories of the American Frontier. The first, ‘The Revival’ is about a religious sect that met at Cane Ridge in Kentucky. Between 10,000-25,000 people attended. The second is about a mine running dry and how a community was ripped apart as a result. Both are worth reading, as is the *Golem’s* Mighty Swing, which makes up James Sturm’s American Trilogy.
Drawn and Quarterly

Albert and the Others
Guy Delisle
A series of 26 stories with 26 different characters. It uses the comics medium to perfect effect with 15 different panels on each page. The stories all seem to revolve around bodies doing strange things (from jumping out of their skin, to being sucked into a vacuum, or having their spare parts used in a car). All the comics are brilliant, many of them laugh out loud so.
Drawn and Quarterly (Petits Livres)

Ghost Stories
Jeff Lemire
Any book marked to be shelved in ‘Farm life/ Hockey/ graphic novels’ has got to be interesting. I’ve yet to be in a bookstore with a ‘farm life’ section though! A story about how a pair of brothers’ relationship revolves around ice hockey and their interest in it.
Top Shelf



Hieronymus B.

Ulf K.

ISBN 978-1-60309-008-7 / £12

This is my first encounter with Ulf K. and I can't say I'm disappointed. Ulf K. is an illustrator based in Düsseldorf, Germany and this book is a collection of stories that he's contributed to various magazines and anthologies. Named after Hieronymus Bosch, a fifteenth century Netherlandish artist, the character here is a minor clerk, working in public administration, who's confronted with a series of predicaments. The art style is somewhere between Chris Ware and David B. and the collections of stories are frankly magical. In fact, along with *Albert and the Others* by Guy Delisle, this is the best comic book I've read in the past six months. Not only is the work fabulous but Top Shelf have also done a pretty impeccable job of binding it, with uncoated, off-white paper inside, sewn binding and a hardback case.

Top Shelf Productions – mondgucker.blogspot.com

his belief that fictional events cannot do harm in real life, and that ideas should essentially be free to wander through our mind. This is taken further with the juxtaposition of the upcoming Great War, and the abject failure of imagination that war clearly entails. Again like *Watchmen* he also uses another narrative to be integrated into the main story; in this case the hotel proprietor's White Book, which is a collection of pornographic pastiches by famous artists and writers.

Without question the scale of the project is fairly startling. *Lost Girls* is a three volume work, each one 112 pages in length, which is presented in a heavy slipcase. Full colour throughout, it is printed onto beautiful paper, and bound with apparently no expense paid. The narrative intricacy and artwork are also unquestionably some of the most brilliant that has been presented in the comic medium. Still within this if the work is supposed to be 'pornography' then I'm not sure it is entirely successful, on the basis of its complexity and sexual grey areas. Having said that, the books are about sex, and they are remarkably successful at showing sexuality in all its weird permutations.

Top shelf productions

Daybreak (episode two)

Brian Ralph

ISBN 0-9777672-4-6 / £7

Based in an unknown future, after an unmentioned apocalypse, this is a great book. The story follows a boy, who's lost his arm, and his dog as they escape zombies and try and survive in the wilds of a collapsed American dream. In terms of the narrative it's all

fairly standard stuff explored in lots of other stories, and of course a number of films. Where the comic gets interesting though is the fact it continually breaks the 'fourth wall'. The reader is the unseen character throughout the whole book, the eyes of the character being how the reader sees all the action takes place. The technique adds pace, claustrophobia and atmosphere even if it takes a few pages to get used to. There's nothing that particularly deep and meaningful to the book, it's just a great, frenetic ride through some potential disaster – I can't wait for the third book.

Bodega Press – www.bodegadistribution.com

On the outside looking in

Kaisa Leka

ISBN 952-99378-4-9 / £14.99

This is a beautiful looking autobiographical comic from Finland. A two colour (red and blue) cover gives way to a two colour story inside. The art reminds me slightly of early Lewis Trondheim stuff (Lapinot etc.), it doesn't really worry about having a 'scene' or even a floor for the characters to stand on, but it still works very effectively. The story is essentially about how the author and her partner became the people they are, through school, the punk scene, straight-edge, major medical surgery (the amputation of the author's feet), the army (it's mandatory in Finland) and then through Hare Krishna and then finally through a guru called Maharaja. The book was fascinating until it got deep into the politics of various different sects of Hare Krishna. Still, even within this section the writing style is bouncy and engaging. Recommended.

Absolute Truth Press

Graphic Witness

George A. Walker (editor)

Collecting a story each from four wordless comic artists: Frans Massereel, Lynd Ward, Giacomo Patri and Laurence Hyde. The book has an interesting history written by George A. Walker and thoughts from comic artist Seth. People interested in anything by World War 3 illustrated (Peter Kuper, Seth Tobocman, Eric Drooker etc.) should check this out as a matter of urgency. Giacomo Patri's story was incredible, who knew lino was that versatile?

A Firefly book

Iraq: Operation corporate takeover

Sean Michael Wilson, Lee O'Connor

This book takes us back to 2003, soon after the invasion, whilst the Coalition Provisional Authority was busy selling various bits of Iraq to international corporations. Unfortunately the comic isn't very good, the story is earnest enough, but it rings hollow, and frankly the idea that bloggers posting information made much of a difference either to international opinion or policy is ludicrous when you

consider what has happened subsequent to 2003. Better to read *The Occupation* by Patrick Cockburn (it was published by Verso in 2006).

War on Want

Low Born #1-#5

Kelly Hernandez

A series of off the wall comics being written since 2002 that just landed at the Last Hours Po Box. They're all worth picking up especially since they're only 50p. My favourite was *Day Tripper #2*, which is a wordless day through London, visiting some of

my favourite bits namely GOSH comics, Foyles books and the Tate Modern.

www.kellyhernandez.co.uk

book & comic reviews

The Garden Sketchbook

A-K Laine and Emma Wills
ISBN 0-9533543-7-7

£5

A frankly gorgeous book documenting the transformation of a normal, grey back garden into an allotment. The book works on several levels; the first is the straight documentation of two women converting their garden into an edible feast. The second is as a punk rock do it yourself guide to making your own allotment by following the authors (and avoiding their mistakes!). The third is that the book is also an art book showcasing A-K Laine's distinctive illustration style. Oh and the book also comes with some mystery seeds, which I plan to plant in our shared garden in the next few weeks to see what happens. (edd)

Atlantic Press – www.atlanticpressbooks.com

Mad Cow, Bird Flu, Global Village

Dan Perjovschi
ISBN 978 1 84467 166 3
£7.99

Dan Perjovschi's art lies somewhere between Keith Herring's wall scrawls and David Shrigley's unedited brain mess. Frankly, if I'm being honest the art is much more in the David Shrigley school, though thankfully Dan Perjovschi manages to transcend these limitations, and frankly once past the crudeness of the drawing the message and content of his work sings. Originally trained as a classical painter in a Soviet style art academy in Romania Perjovschi has subverted his training to produce raw and incisive graphics. Using a marker and white paper wrapped across the wall he appears to just let his mind wander across it. The politics are fluid and difficult to pin down, but play on the historical shifts post-9/11, attack US military interventions and has little time for either the EU or Russia. Some of the cartoons fall flat occasionally, but mostly they offer a sharp critique with only a few marker lines. (edd)

Verso Press – www.verso.co.uk



Six years after the seismic *Days of War, Nights of Love* was first published, Crimethinc are back with a third book

Artwork from: Expect Resistance Artwork by: Felix Vallotton

Expect Resistance

Crimethinc (various)
No ISBN
£8

Six years after the seismic *Days of War, Nights of Love* was first published, Crimethinc are back with a third book, longer, deeper, higher and heavier. "Expect Resistance" is a collection of previous texts (most notably from "Harbinger") - reedited, rearranged and expanded with great care and attention to detail - interwoven with personal accounts from the living, breathing world of radical political activists. The polemic is printed in black ink, the narrative in red; together, the two supposedly merge into a "third book," something which I feel occurs successfully only in one chapter ("Failure / Crash and Burn").

The graphics are, as always, clean, emotive Image Bank photographs or bold, screaming bitmaps, deeply associative for dramatic effect. The overall quality of the book, from layout to binding to inks to image registration, could only be compared to that of heavy art tomes, and clearly reflects a love for the craft that measures on the Richter scale.

The subject matter is classic post-leftist radicalism, offering a "personal relationship" with Anarchism - much like Southern Baptists do with Christ. Freedom is an abstract enslaved to pathos, revolution is privatised and carried out on behalf of "beautiful moments." Unfortunately, pas-

sionate yet vague, amorphous calls for tactile politics, laden with metaphors and superlatives, can be just as overbearing as Soviet shades of grey. If Bookchin threw out lifestyle's baby with the bathwater, "Expect Resistance" adopts the bathwater with the baby. Furthermore, too often the obviously bright and well-meaning authors sacrifice concrete argumentation for the sake of jargonized pyrotechnics, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing: "Call this escapist - perhaps it is; but what class of people is most disturbed by the idea of escape? Jailers." they write, as if they didn't know how nonsensical such an assertion is once stripped of its artistic license. Hey, I'm disturbed by escapism too, fuckers.

The intrinsic tension defining Crimethinc - between immediatism and realpolitik - is not resolved in this book, though I suspect it's as close as they'll ever get. This is Crimethinc at their very best, crystallised; if you were looking for something different/more from them in "Expect Resistance," I suggest you resist expectation.

All in all, criticism notwithstanding, this is an intelligent, incisive and beautiful book, to be read like "The Neverending Story": with a flashlight on a stormy night, by a young daydreaming misfit hiding in some dusty, forgotten storage space. (Dr Zoidberg)

www.crimethinc.com. Available from Active Distribution in Europe.



“I’LL MAKE NO SUBSCRIPTION TO YOUR PARADISE”: Getting critical about Crass

WITH THE RECENT UPSURGE IN INTEREST IN CRASS - FROM A PARTIAL REUNION, TO SEVERAL BOOKS - GAVIN BURROWS REVIEWS THE IMPACT OF THE BAND.

Back when the countdown to the invasion of Iraq was on, I was busily telling everybody the reason for my war opposition - I feared it would lead to Crass reforming. This proved prescient because, after years of rumour, an anti-war benefit did go ahead under the rebranded heading Crass Collective, in turn leading to sporadic performances as the Last Amendment.

As this story might suggest, back in the day I had little empathy for Crass. I can remember the moment of surprise when I discovered that this swarty boover band were actually singing about anarchy and peace. But that didn't make me any more enamoured to them. That may have been partly down to the tribal nature of youth culture. No small part was due to the notoriously terrible state of their 'music'. (I listened happily to Throbbing Gristle, the Fall or Neubauten, none of them exactly top-forty-friendly outfits, but drew the line at Crass's tinny racket.) But it was more that, though I wouldn't have been able to define it at the time, something felt confining about their strictures - something strangely at odds with their message of personal liberation.

Crass' brand of anarcho-punk was and remains controversial, stirring up devotion, hostility and plain bewilderment in roughly equal measure. Joe Banks has claimed their recordings "change people's lives forever, immediately as they experience it for the first time." (Sound Projector 10) The Punk 77 website describes them as "new puritans who

criticised everything left right and centre and offered in its place some unfeasible nirvana which... would be peopled with people like themselves." With the [partial] reformation and renewed interest in the band (with two books and one documentary appearing), perhaps now is a good time to get beyond such polarised responses and develop a more nuanced response to what they did.

The band themselves fed the fire, often being absurdly self-aggrandising ("It is not grandiose to claim that we have been one of the most influential bands in the history of British rock...it was us who almost single-handedly created anarchy as a popular movement for millions of people.")

But if anarcho-punk was full of invective about this, it was equally vehement about itself – it was propelled by self-criticism and negative energy to a degree that verged on fundamentalist.

Though the band started gigging in 1977, it's vital to understand anarcho-punk as something which followed the original punk wave. Of course anarcho-punks castigated the original punks for selling out on their early commitments. But if anarcho-punk was full of invective about this, it was equally vehement about itself – it was propelled by self-criticism and negative energy to a degree that verged on fundamentalist. If Anarcho was a second chance, a means to avoid

making punk's mistakes all over again, this could only be achieved by setting yourself a Spartan lifestyle of permanent outsiderhood.

Crass's crucial contribution to this was to add a generational layer. The majority of the band were old hippies, who had lived together in a commune since 1967. As Richard Cross argues in 'The Hippies Now Wear Black': "Importantly, Crass claimed punk as an extension and redefinition of elements brought forward from the culture of hippy... Even so, Crass's was never an uncritical reading of hippy, but rather a reclamation of what were seen as common principles... castigating the self-satisfied hedonism of sixties counter-culture, whilst romanticising its

more consciously political elements. Disappointment with the decline and corrosion of hippy may help to explain the intensity of Crass's subsequent investment in punk. It had to work where hippy had failed."

In short, if the young anarcho-punks wanted a scene to express two years' worth of festering resentment, here was a band who had twenty such years saved up! They'd seen Jefferson Airplane ("all

book & comic reviews

your private property is target for your enemy") become Jefferson Starship ("we built this city on rock'n'roll!") years before the Clash had appeared on Top of the Pops.

Moreover, despite being frequently painted as political fanatics and their own attempts at a 'sussed' image, the band remained hippies first and anarchists second. Though they undoubtedly blurred the line between artist and activist, their mindset remained with their origins – in subculture. Many members later admitted that at the time they knew little of the meaning of the circle-A flags they'd hang behind their stage. This isn't necessarily a criticism, cultural movements can have advantages over political ones.

However, while political groups can easily become cults perhaps there is something inherently conformist about cultural ones. As Richard Cross says "anarcho-punk... would sustain and extend its influence through the self-directed activities of its adherents – who would form more bands, produce ever greater numbers of publications, set-up record labels and radical co-operatives." Growth became cellular, spreading widely but only spreading copies of the template. Bands who didn't don the necessary black, detune their guitars and sing about the importance of a punk diet could find audiences antagonistic. "Anarchists can be a conservative lot, I've discovered", Zounds' Steve Lake was later to reflect.

While Crass were themselves often critical of this tendency (something we'll come onto later), in some senses the form of anarcho-punk made this inevitable.

This moralism was at its worst in the band's attitude to class. Class divisions were supposed to come merrily tumbling down through the transforming act of putting on a punk gig with a low door price.

The politics simply had to be cut down to fit inside the stenciled slogans and short shouty songs.

Another downside of subculture Crass epitomised to the nth degree is a tendency to moralism and superiority. The Anarchist Workers Group found in anarcho-punk "the worst kind of elitism



Photo by: Trunt.

Crass at the Cleatormoor Civic Hall, UK, 3rd May 1984.

Left to right: Pete Wright (bass), Steve Ignorant (vocals), N.A. Palmer (guitar).

- the politics of 'if everyone was like me wouldn't the world be a wonderful place.'

This moralism was at its worst in the band's attitude to class. Though rightly wary of Leftist groups like Socialist Worker, Crass then throw the baby out with the bathwater. Class divisions were supposed to come merrily tumbling down through the transforming act of putting on a punk gig with a low door price (*'Punk's the people's music, so you can stuff ideas of class/ Middle class, working class, I don't fucking care.'*)

Perhaps the most telling lines came on End Result, a sanctimonious diatribe against the workers they'd see entering the Ford plant near their commune base: *'I hate the living dead and their work in the factories / They go like sheep to their*

the bait of work is more often thought to be wages than shiny signs. For a band so obsessed with 1984 they might have paid more attention to Orwell: "if there's a hope for the future, it lies with the proles."

Then again at the same time Joe Strummer was forgetting his own public school origins to dress himself in the boots 'n' braces uniform of a rebel worker – an absurd stereotype which bore no relation to the realities of Thatcherite Britain. Oi took up this class-identity-as-fashion-statement, which made them one of Crass' frequent targets. Perhaps an antidote to such romanticism was needed. As Sid Vicious pointed out "I've met the man on the street. And he's a cunt."

And it should also be said that Crass's actions were often ahead of their stultifying rhetoric. For example, many anarcho-punks loftily refused to support the striking Miners unless they all collectively gave up eating meat. Crass, conversely, played them benefit after benefit – their last ever gig was for the Miners.

But they chiefly clung to their hippie origins - imagining power as ultimately nothing more than a state of mind. As the Bureau of Public Secrets put it in On The Poverty of Hip Life, "the hippie thinks that alienation is merely a matter of perception - 'it's all in your head'... existing conditions will go away as soon as everyone acts as if they didn't exist." So Penny Rimbaud was to claim in Last of the Hippies "if each individual can learn to act out of conscience rather

production lines / They live on illusions, don't face the realities / All they live for is that big blue sign / It says... Ford.' Subcultures are of course voluntaristic. You choose to go to the punk gig that's a benefit for animal rights. Here Crass completely lose the plot and assume that workers must similarly choose to enter their factories - quite oblivious that

than greed, the machinery of power will collapse."

Yet, before we side with the nay-sayers and dismiss Crass as nothing but old hippies hidden under new haircuts, we should add they were as much influenced by Dadaist tradition. Penny Rimbaud said, "We used confusion and confrontation in much the same way." The Dadaist spirit of provocation cross-bred with the anarcho-punk fetish for denunciation and infused the band. After all, why inspire when you can goad?

They'd perpetually taunt their audience with singalong lines like 'I'm not going to change the system, you're not going to change the system' or 'Who's your leader? Who do you watch?'

However, Crass' Wikipedia entry remarks how "using such deliberately mixed messages was part of [their] strategy of presenting themselves as a 'barrage of contradictions'" While fans and critics of Crass would argue endlessly, both would make the same elementary mistake – taking them at face value. Fans assumed they had it all worked out and were right. Their critics agreed with all of that right up to the last word.

The content of their message was increasingly vying with the pedagogical pronouncements grating against their genuine desire to generate a critical audience. Crass therefore tended to batter their audience with their slogans, then curse them for fools should any of them follow any of it! This was no plan but simply a matter of trying to get the best from the bind they found themselves in. If they couldn't transcend their limitations, they could do the next-best thing – exploit them. So these contradictions came to fuel the band at the same time they beset it - what made the mix conflicted also made it heady, what made it confused also made it vital and unpredictable.

In their wake some bands did continue to duplicate Crass' weird, sometimes heady mix of Dada and dogmatism – Uncarved Block-era Flux or Ssh!-era Chumbawamba. But Crass' role as the aristocrats of anarcho went to Conflict. Songs titled Rival Tribal Revel Rebel or Where Next Columbus became songs titled Stand Up and Fucking Fight. For all their (quite unstaged) militancy and



Photo by: Trunt.

Crass at the Cleatormoor Civic Hall, UK, 3rd May 1984.

Left to right: N.A. Palmer (guitar), Eve Libertine (vocals), Pete Wright (bass).

Or as Rimbaud commented, when asked in the fanzine Mucilage if some weren't going to the gigs just to have fun: "So fucking what? It's better than not having fun."

ceaseless run-ins with the authorities, Conflict's relation to their audience was always to confirm and validate their beliefs and expectations.

Perhaps the era is best summed up by the autonomist magazine *Aufheben*. "Far too many anarchos simply changed their clothes, diet, drugs and musical tastes, deluding themselves that by doing so they were creating a new world within the belly of the old which would wither away once it recognized its comparative existential poverty." Of course, if we were to wonder how well that worked out then hindsight could be our guide. But the beauty of *Aufheben*'s critique is that it continues at the point so many others stop... "But most of the criticisms of lifestyle politics, then and now, were and are mere defences by militants prepared to accept the continual deferral of pleasure in favour of the 'hard work' of politics. The desire to create the future in the present has always been a strength of anarchists. How one lives is political." Or as Rimbaud commented, when asked in the fanzine *Mucilage* if some weren't going to the gigs just to have fun: "So fucking what? It's better than not having fun."

In the run-off from their final record, a voice can be clearly heard intoning their final slogan – "we only did it for a laugh." Crass attempted, perhaps harder than any others, to become more than merely a band. Though their efforts brought successes, those very successes soon tied them in a set of contradictions they were unable to cut through - so instead decided to emphasise. In the end, they are best understood not as political thinkers (and certainly not as musicians) but as provocateurs. And we were provoked! Some of us still are. That counts as a success. ☒

Gavin Burrows
<http://lucidfrenzy.blogspot.com/>

Handy links for more information on Crass
<http://www.southern.com/southern/band/CRASS/biog.html>
<http://www.killyourpetpuppy.co.uk/news/?p=554>
<http://greengalloway.blogspot.com>
<http://www.uncarved.org/music/apunk/crass.html>
http://flag.blackened.net/revolt/awg/awg_thatcher1.html
George Berger's The Story of Crass was reviewed in *Last Hours* 15 along with *The Day the Country Died* by Ian Glasper

ZI- NES

325 #5

A4/ b&w/ photocopied/ 67 pages/ £2
325 is self titled as "an insurgent magazine of social war and anarchy". One of its main focuses is a strong anti-prison stance. This issue includes an article about prison revolt in Belgium and lots of letters and articles from anarchist prisoners around the world. 325 also pushes the concept that we live in a prison society and has an article describing someone's clandestine life 'running away from the prison society'. There is an interesting round up of the rise in resistance to evictions and gentrification in Berlin and a report and chronology of the actions and riots at the 2007 G8. 325 is an important magazine that should be read more widely. Its insurrectionary, no compromise perspective is fresh and reflects a growing movement few people are tapped into here in the UK. (M)
www.325collective.com – Natterjack Press

Applecore #13

A6/ b&w/ copied/ 44 pages/ £0.50
An always enjoyable zine from Warwickshire, though now coming from Northampton rather than Rugby. Unfortunately Henry who writes the zine was in a car accident, which has delayed issue 13 and led to him breaking his pubic ramus in four places (ouch!). It's still a good read about summer adventures, fear of needles, train journeys, some reviews, a couple of rants and stuff about the canals around Rugby. It's all written with an even Midlands tone which reminds me of my teenage years

when I lived up there. (edd)
mashroobusapplecore@hotmail.co.uk

Back2Front #3

A4/ b&w/ printed/ 52 pages/ £1.50
A pretty well written zine from Northern Ireland. This issue has interviews with Propagandhi, Oi Polloi, I Object and Back to the Planet. Personally the Oi Polloi interview was the one I found most interesting. There was also a not bad article on animal liberation, though I think it might well only appeal to the already converted. Having said that the history – as in before the twentieth century – of animal rights in the Western world was something I had no knowledge of! Sometimes I think the layout of the zine lets it down slightly. For example the aforementioned article about animal liberation is pretty much eight solid pages of two column text with the odd image within the text. Even though the content was interesting it wasn't too appealing to actually read. Still, you should stick with it, because it's worth reading. (edd)
back2front_danny@yahoo.co.uk

Breeding Ground – a parenting zine

A5/ b&w/ copied/ 40 pages/ 50p plus SAE
The first issue of a collaborative effort of some anarchists who have had children, that looks at issues that arose around this major, life-changing decision. The focus is not on 'alternative parenting' but about how to reconcile your radical critique of the world with

ABOLISH RESTAURANTS



Abolish Restaurants #1

A5/ b&w/ printed/ 56 pages/ £1
This is brilliant. Reprinted by Active distribution, this is a smart zine deconstructing all the power structures and exploitation that goes into making restaurants. Taking us on a history of how they were established, why they're inherently attached to our current capitalist system (the concept of restaurants didn't really exist till the nineteenth century). It runs through how exploitative of workers the system is, and different positions are filled. It then goes through how the restaurant can be dismantled. The thing that really impressed me though about the zine was that it was elegantly laid out and beautifully illustrated (in a style reminiscent of late Japanese woodcuts). It made the zine more engaging, and easier to read. I'd never really thought about restaurants before reading

this – beyond the fact I don't much like being 'waited' on – but now I have a better sense of how systemically messed up they are! (edd)

www.activedistribution.org

the choices you have to make as a parent, and ideas how to break down the nuclear family and build support networks outside state institutions. Contents include homeschooling vs school, collective parenting, ideas for free kids' activities, and a very interesting story of deciding whether to circumcise or not. There are plenty more personal thoughts and tales, a cartoon by Kate Evans and book reviews, too. Although I have never wanted children of my own, I found this an engaging insight into the questions anarchist parents may be confronted with. There really aren't many radical (as opposed to alternative) parenting resources out there so this zine deserves to be supported and distributed far and wide. (Isy) *Community Base, 113 Queens Road, Brighton BN1 3XG - parentzine@google-mail.com*

Deranged Issue #0

A4/ b&w/ copied/ 40 pages/ £?

Only one year ago it would seem hard to believe that 2007 would bring three new anarchist magazines to London. This is heartening news, hopefully a prelude to the long-awaited re-flourish of the city's anarchist/anti-authoritarian publishing landscape and (who knows?) maybe even a resurgence of its anarchist scene as a whole.

While the rest of the scene's regular publications had fallen into decline, writings from an insurrectionist perspective coming out of London had all but vanished. For this reason, *Deranged* is precious – it comes to fill a gap that has existed for too long: To read about the struggle for self-managed social space or debates on prison from this point of view is refreshing. Even more: it is a proof that a healthy anarchist scene can only flourish if all its strands are present, dynamic and open to one another. *Deranged* will hopefully strengthen our scene's insurrectionist strand; it would be crazy to wish otherwise. (antonis)

Deranged c/o B.M. Elephant, London WC1N 3XX - outsiderseverywhere@yahoo.com

Do The Dog Skazine #47

A5/b&w/printed/8 pages/£5 for 4 issue subscription

I don't know how long the zine has had this rounded-box layout, but it looks great and makes everything easy to read. Compiling ska news from the UK and around the world, Kev includes tons of bands from The Slackers to Splitters, new signings Dirty Revolution and Aussie legends The Porkers in this issue. If you want to know what 2-tone or ska-punk you should be checking out, pick up the latest copy. (Jas)

www.dothedog.com

Escapades: A journal of thoughtful action #3

A5/ b&w/ footprinted/ 40 pages/ £1

Escapades is a relatively new anarchist journal from Manchester. So that's four new anarchist journals that I know that've been established in the past year; if we can just get the number of people on the street multiplying by four year on year we might be in with a chance! Anyhow, it's a well presented zine (typeset in Futura – you frankly can't go wrong!), with articles on gentrification, climate action, how much Trots suck, a round up of international riots (including one in Great Yarmouth

I didn't know about). The tone of the zine is pretty well thought out; somewhere between Crimethinc's utopianism and Libcom's cynicism. Worth picking up. (edd) *rex.escapades@gmail.com*

Homes #1

A5/ b&w/ printed/ 2x 36 pages/ £2

A slightly esoteric but interesting photo zine by a guy who used to work at Pogo Cafe (and was interviewed in *Last Hours* for issue 13 about it). Split across two books it seems to offer an incomplete document of his life between 2005 and 2007 through London (mainly Hackney), Vancouver, Turku (Finland) and bits of France and Germany. Unlike some photozines this is printed on decent paper, and has gone through a litho offset printer – so the reproduction and greytone are all sharp. Pretty good! (edd)

xarkadydarellx@yahoo.com / baitart.wetpaint.com

Loserdom #16

A5/ b&w/ copied (and hand bound)/ 52 pages/ £1 (?)

This is a really awesome zine from Ireland. Hand bound with hand lino-printed covers it features a bunch of interviews, articles and comics. It's written by a pair of brothers Anto and Eugene and they're good writers. I especially enjoyed the comics though, not least since most of them were about cycling, and as everyone should know cycling and comics and pretty much the two coolest things in the world, so they make a nice match! Recommended. (edd)

www.loserdomzine.com

Lucid Frenzy #10

A5/ b&w/ copied/ 28 pages/ £1

Frankly reviewers don't come much better than Gavin Burrows, sometimes listening to Radio 4's 'Front Row' ('cause I'm a good liberal at heart) I wonder why they can't just get Gavin on there and actually give me a proper review of the film, or opera or whatever it is in question. Needless to say I enjoyed the reviews in here about 'Spider Man 3', 'This is England', 'The USA vs. John Lennon', 'Russian Ark' and three other reviews. Each review is a couple of thousand words and is closer to an article about the subjects bought up by the film than the film itself. He's got a new website now, which you should check out. (edd)

gavinburrows@btinternet.com

Man Man and Friends #3

A5ish/b&w/printed/16 pages/£1 (+50p p&p)

Okay, so this may be a little old, and only one part of an extensive back-catalogue (that includes 4 volumes of 'Man Man and Friends', 'Mediocraplyse', 'The Wonder of Me', 'The Smell of the Wild', and the inaugural edition of 'Woman Woman') hailing from the sick-sad comic world of Gareth Brookes, it's simply too good a review opportunity to pass by. For the uninitiated 'Man Man' is a modern-day protagonist, hilariously manifested in stick man form. Free from the confines of conventional illustration, he has become a spokesman for his size-zero generation, offering some simultaneously bleak and hilarious observations in the process. Its sale is recommended 'for grown up readers only' but, with all due respect, I am forced to say 'tish!' a 'fispyl' to



Eastenders – glimpses of the radical history of East London

A4/ b&w/ printed/ 20 pages/ £1.50

In just 20 pages Eastenders manages to go from 1381 to near enough present day covering some of the radical history events in East London. It's bloody brilliant; frankly I wish I had been able to write history with this level of subjectivity when I was stuck at university studying it – I'd have had much more fun! Unashamedly biased, and sometimes incomplete, these histories are an interesting read. There's also a poster back cover which sums up the zine and is currently stuck to the wall next to my computer. (edd)

Past Tense, www.past-tense.org.uk

that request. In all honesty, it's as corrupting an influence as turning 12-year-olds onto the wit and wisdom of Charlie Brooker. Simply put, if there was less mobile-phone porn and more copies of 'Man Man' circulating our playgrounds, schools might prove capable of spawning a more conducive future for all. In this issue 'Man Man' is joined by his female equivalent 'Woman Woman', an 'Ungrateful Grapefruit', 'Ra Man', 'Shitting Ghost', a 'Mere Trifle' and an 'Uncompromising Compass' (or should that be pair of compasses?) If you haven't got a clue what I'm talking about, seeing really is believing; so you had better buzz off and beeline for that back-catalogue, if you don't want to regret wasting time that could be better spent laughing. (Chris Lipgloss)

www.appallingnonsense.co.uk

Misery & Gin #2

A5/b&w/photocopied/24 pages/30p

I didn't pick up issue #1 of this zine. If you didn't either, it's a roughly laid out cut and paste photocopy. The aesthetics leave a little to be desired, with large chunks of text and very few pictures to break it up, but the content is interesting. At the start, there is an account of the author being arrested and how it actually wasn't that bad, which is a cool perspective to hear. There are also an inspired few pages which highlight parts of the Bible where God is shown to be a sadistic bastard. There are reviews and stuff too. An



Hey monkey riot! #3 - the G8 issue
A5/colour cover/b&w/duplicated/26 pages/£1.70

Edd of this very publication has been treating us to stories and thoughts from his life in the form of his hey monkey riot! comics, in which his monkey faced character deals with the extraordinary and everyday demands of being an anarchist, zinester, geek, punkrocker, and illustration student in London. Alongside his daily – yes, daily! – comic strips uploaded to his website (<http://heymonkey.lasthours.org.uk/>), a project he's undertaken for a year, he's produced comic zines too. This one is based on his adventures in Germany at the G8 summit protests. It's in Edd's familiar and striking blocky black and white ink drawing style with a cast of animal characters. The story doesn't try to sum up what happened or convert the reader to anything, but shares Edd's experiences, which include his travel, finding and spending time with his friends at the protest camp, confusion and chaos and making decisions of what to do and how, and getting lost in the woods, conveying the personal experience and feeling behind the mass protests we see on TV in an accessible and humanising way. It comes in a 3 colour printed card cover of a snarling German cow (cops in Germany are called "bullen") and is highly recommended for anyone who enjoys comics, or personal accounts of protest or both – in fact it's a must have. (Isy)

<http://heymonkey.lasthours.org.uk>

amusing bargain. (Jas)
porkiepiggy@gmail.com

Most punks are total arseholes #3
A5/ b&w/ footprinted/ 40 pages/ £0.50

Despite being one of the punks who's probably an areshole in the eyes of this zine I still bloody loved it. It's snotty, covered in black ink, opinions and tiny text. Fucking brilliant! It's offhinged in the way that Beat Motel or Scanner are; except this is explicitly a "pro-working class punk anarchist zine". There's quite a good article about drug abuse amongst all the craziness too. You can contact them at use@f*x?ng*st@mp.notacommie.com (edd) Mpata, Po Box 467, London E8 3QX

Pause for Breath
Reflection from the anarchist movement
A5/ b&w/ copied/ 52 pages/ £2

Another anarchist journal; though I'm not sure they're planning for this to be a regular thing. Milan Rai is given a bunch of pages to spout rubbish about how 'accountable direct action' is a threat to the state. I'm not even sure where to start on that, beyond the fact that there isn't a single historical event that bears it out, and despite successions of 'accountable direct action' against Iraq, nuclear weapons etc. the state hasn't budged an inch (if anything its moved in the other direction). The rest of the journal though is well written and thought out. Dave Morris from Haringey Solidarity group does a four page round up of the potential of the anarchist movement in the last twenty years, whilst elsewhere there's discussions on feminism, anarchists in academia, the burgeoning green anarchist movement, and documents the Reading squatted community garden. (edd)
apauseforbreath.blogspot.com

Phlegm Comic #7
A4/b&w/printed/12 pages/£3.50

T.F.I. Phlegm #7! Dispensing yet another corrective 'tonic' to a world turned upside down, Dan Phlegm's mardy-bum-fine-art press has once again, re-written the zine-makers handbook with this A4, colour-covered, vinyl sticker-secured, green-inked tracing-paper-sleeved vituperation. Print-quality infatuation aside, the content is anything but the 'spoonful of sugar' you might expect, with 6 full-page, layout-heavy comics; a double-page 'Drugs Guide' that's more astute than any 'Ask Frank' campaign; and 2 striking, stand-alone illustrations. The comics themselves present a marked departure from Dan's previous caricatures, offering full-page 'experience comics' that really take a number of good reads and a couple of sleepless nights to ensure every morsel is properly digested (only to repeat on you when you least expect it). Suffice it to say, this isn't a comic for the apathetically faint-hearted. If you think you can stomach it, however, a prescribed dose of Phlegm provides a miracle cure for that 21st Century 'ennui' you may have been experiencing. Unlike Clowes's 'Carbolic Smoke

Ball,' consuming Phlegm more than once a day has been scientifically proven to increase longevity, although it should be observed with caution that this product has been extensively tested on 'northerners.' Please read instructions (and this issue's interview with the proud inventor of the Phlegm Life Tonic) carefully. (Chris Lipgloss)
www.phlegmcomics.com

Profane Existence
A4/ b&w/ printed/ 84 pages/ \$5

Profane Existence has got cheaper but a little bit smaller. Still with the free CD and all the usual crust interviews, reviews and politics. A good read. I especially enjoyed the interview with the New York artist Fly. I really love her work but had never read an interview with her – she's erudite and funny; and she used to be an international athlete! There's also a whole bunch of her work reproduced so you get to see some of the projects she's been working on over the last twenty years or so. I didn't get much out of the CD, but then for some reason CDs that come with zines/magazines never do much for me, but even more so now with the internet making it so easy to find music. All the same, a good read worth getting hold of. (edd)
www.profaneexistence.com

The Revolution Will Not Be Amplified #2
A5/b&w/photocopied/36 pages/free

This free zine from Norwich has its 'ups' and 'downs.' Climbing the summit of cogent contributions is a review of King Creosote at Norwich Arts Centre, an article on the illogistics of gigging in Norwich's fair City and an interesting reading of Bruce Springsteen's unsung influence on the latest Arcade Fire record. The rapid descent into polka-dot posturing however, stems from some pretty dire examples of what might be best described, as the airs and graces of 'Norwich School of Art Bohemia,' emanating from a rather trashy editorial, a very self-opinionated account of a Camden-Crawl-esque festival taking place in the City at the time, and literally the worst centre-page comic I have ever seen (It may have only taken me 16 seconds to read, but those are 16 seconds of my life I am NEVER going to get back). More like tripping up a hill-top, than writing the way up a mountain, it will be interesting to see if issue #3 poses more of an 'expedition' than this half-hearted hike. (Chris Lipgloss)
www.myspace.com/therevolutionwillnotbeamplified

Riot 77 #11
A4/ b&w/ printed/ 52 pages/ 3euros

Fairly standard punk zine with interviews, reviews etc on glossy paper. Interviews with The Briefs, John King and Deadline. There's articles/ reviews on Wasted festival, and Belfast's Rockabilly roots. There's also a bunch of DVD, book, live and record reviews. Photos of bands throughout. (edd)
riot77magazine@hotmail.com



Morgenmuffel #16

A5/ b&w/ copied/ 52 pages/ £1

Five things I love about Morgenmuffel #16

1. That the title of the zine means morning grump in German and I am reading it in a German café on a Friday morning. This even compensates for the mediocre coffee they usually serve in Kreuzberg's amazing-looking cafés and which usually leaves you a bit grumpy...
2. The déjà-vu feeling when reading the great opening story on last summer's G8 in Rostock and the reminder that there's a whole DIY infrastructure behind what catches the eye in our political actions. Way to go!
3. The things-I-hate lists. I can sympathise and near-totally agree with Nik ("who is not english") - yet I'd take out Brighton's bicycle paths (eh?) and football: C'mon, watching your team always lose can sometimes be fun.
4. That Edd's hate-list includes (print) deadlines and that this review is submitted well past the deadline. Erm sorry Edd I don't actually love this and it won't happen again!
5. The morgenmuffel website. Clever & minimal design, awesome content: www.morgenmuffel.co.uk/ (antonis)

www.morgenmuffel.co.uk

Robots and Electronic Brains #17

A5/b&w/photocopied/40 pages/£1.50

This is a great, long-standing UK zine that never fails to push the envelope of expectation. Remarkably simplistic in layout, it has a distinct, accessible, style of its own, and packs plenty a punch in the content department. In this issue you will be regaled by lengthy interviews with Public Enemy, Goldblade, Listen With Sarah and Nosferatu D2, shot

through with plenty of record and zine reviews. Furthermore, you get a free, 5-record-label CD compendium with offerings diverse enough to juxtapose lo-fi acoustics and glitchy electronica, alongside a host of other tracks, yielding more thoroughly-obscure recommendations than any gleaning of the 'Collective Zine' message board. (Chris Lipgloss)
www.robotsandelectronicbrains.co.uk

Rolling Thunder #5

A4/ colour/ 100 pages/ £4

I first encountered Crimethinc some years ago as I sat in a cramped living room chatting with friends. On the coffee table lay a truly battered and well thumbed copy of "Days of War, Nights of Love" (Crimethinc's flagship publication). I was a young punk kid lightly politicised by the threat of war in Iraq but with no real knowledge of radical culture. Anarchy was just a word printed on the sleeves of my parents old punk records. The text and images I found in those faded pages offered something new and and engaging that I had never experienced.

A couple of years passed and Days of War.. was joined on my bookcase by more astute radical literature whilst its seemed Crimethinc had almost gone into hibernation. Or so it seemed. The last few months have seen a flurry of activity from Crimethinc with a new publication (The excellent Expect Resistance) and a new issue of Rolling Thunder, their sporadically released anarchist journal of dangerous living. This, the fifth in the series represents how much Crimethinc has developed over the years. The contents presents some of the best critical analysis of the anarchist scene both in the United States and in Europe I have read in recent years. Largely focusing on the effectiveness of (direct) actions as well as how they can fail and how to respond when they do. Highlights come in the form of a report on the green scare (the FBI's crackdown on members of ALF and ELF) and what it means to be a government informant. As well as a well written and descriptive report of the events surrounding the 2007 G8 protests.

Rolling Thunder is not likely to act as a recruiting tool for anarchism but provides necessary analysis and debate on some of the most crucial topics activists face today. A worthy read for activists left feeling helpless and demotivated by most conventional forms of resistance. (tom fiction)

www.crimethinc.com

Rum Lad #3

A5/ b&w/ photocopied/ 40 pages/ £1.50

Another issue from rum lad Steve Larder, and it's another good'un. This time we have pages from his life between March and October 2007 as he moves around Nottingham, chats to his brother, visits Iceland, seaside towns, and uhh Myspace. It's somewhere between an autobiographical comic and a perzine and



Party Animals

A6/b&w/printed/16 pages/£2

Who wouldn't be happy to review a comic that welcomes its readers with a page of 'nice cats in string vests'? Inside this bento box of surreal caricatures you will find an illustrated menagerie of 'party animals', including 'disco rabbit,' 'leaning rabbit,' 'hairy midget elf,' 'depressed cat,' 'giraffe cakes,' and a 'shark who looked like a dolphin,' alongside other, less animalistic offerings (and a DIY beard-knitting guide to boot). This comic is a real labour of love, with a fairly unique sense of humour, which, like a limp noodle, should be thrown onto a tiled surface to see if it sticks. Fortunately for me, it's perfectly 'al dente,' and never fails to brighten a dull day. If you fancy a few sumptuous morsels to try before you buy, make a reservation at Lizz Lunney's 'Online Comic Sushi' for a free taster off the 'daily specials board.' (Chris Lipgloss)

www.lizzlizz.com

works well because of it, Steve's got a pretty universally appealing graphical style (check it out on page 90 of this zine!), and this is well worth picking up. (edd)

www.stevelarder.co.uk

Savage Messiah #7

A5/ b&w/ copied/ 32 pages/ £2

Written by Laura Oldfield-Ford (who's interviewed elsewhere in this issue), Savage Messiah is a loud exclamation mark against gentrification, yuppies, middle class wankers and a celebration of East London, and its culture. There's reportage style illustrations, bits of comics, photos and rants against and in support of things that Laura believes in. It has a passion and sincerity that seems to be missing from other areas of radical culture. (edd)

savagemessiah@hotmail.co.uk

zine reviews



UK Zine Yearbook 2007

A5/ b&w/ photocopied/ 76 pages/ £1.50

Attempting a representation of the current 'microcosm of the UK zine scene in 2007,' is no easy feat. The end result is a landmark UK project, collating the work of 36 different zinesters within the confines of bespoke cover-art from rum lad, Steve Larder. Inside you'll find a wide selection of interviews, columns, comics and other miscellanea from the archives of 'Artcore,' 'Beat Motel,' 'Colouring Outside The Lines' and 'Dance Like No One's Watching,' through a near-perfect zine alphabet (zalphabet?) that concludes with 'You Can't Say No To Hope,' and 'Zonked.' It's good to finally see the production of a quibble-free print zine, and at £1.50 for approximately 36 double-page spreads, any attempt to resist the touting of this effort, is undoubtedly futile. Toby Chelms really deserves a month of backslaps for this endeavour, and is benevolently looking to pass the Zine Yearbook 2008 'buck' onto other willing participants in the community. My only criticism is that a North/South divide is instantly apparent, with only 3 of the 36 zinesters featured living north of the Leeds line (namely me in County Durham, and 'Ploppy Pants' and 'Good For Nothing?!' in Scotland), and with no offerings from Ireland, it falls slightly short of being wholly representative of the best the UK has to offer. A good gold star is deserving nonetheless, and if you think you can do any better with a 2008 offering, the gauntlet is yours for the taking. (Chris Lipgloss)

A Short Fanzine About Rocking #20

A5/ b&w/ printed/ 74 pages/ £1

A Short Fanzine About Rocking is back for another round - round 20, in fact. I found this issue particularly interesting, as the dude who writes it has just moved to London. Because of this, he writes about what he thinks of certain London venues he is going to for the first time,

such as the Electric Ballroom: "If it wasn't for the overflowing men's urinals it could almost be labelled nice." This issue also has tons of CD reviews and interviews as ever, including a pretty good one with Set Your Goals. (Jas)

myspace.com/ashortfanzineaboutrocking

Spiderplant #10

A5/ b&w/ copied/ 24 pages/ £0.70

A frankly insane comic zine from Nuneaton in Warwickshire (I'm not a fan of Warwickshire - so for me that fact alone explains everything!). The comics remind me a little of Aline Kominsky-Crumb's stuff a lot of autobiographical stuff with a bit of sex and lots of real life. There also seems to be a healthy infatuation with cats. All in all well worth reading. (edd)

www.myspace.com/casinojo

Trees #3

A6/ b&w/ copied (hand bound)/ 34 pages/ £1.50 (?)

This is a perzine from St. Albert in Canada. Its hand produced, held together with an elastic band, and all the text is hand written by the author Samantha (and two contributors Chelsea and Celeste). Its pretty intense. It was also slightly difficult to read because of the pages all being slightly different angles to each other; it seems that they were trimmed before being bound when really you should bind and then trim. Once I got past that though it was okay, the hand writing, though in lower case is relatively easy to read. It reminded me a little bit of the writing style in 'My Evil Twin Sister', a perzine from the States a few years ago. (edd)

thereisartinyou@hotmail.co.uk

World War 3 illustrated #38

A4/ b&w and colour/ printed/ 106 pages/ \$5

For those that don't know, World War 3 illustrated is a radical comix magazine from New York city. This issue is subtitled 'Facts on the Ground' and has extensive coverage of the recent Oaxaca uprising after the governor tried to disperse a teacher's strike with riot police. It's all documented by Peter Kuper's sketchbook as he had moved there from New York soon before all the events took place. There's also comics, unsurprisingly, about the occupation in Iraq and Palestine (including one by Abu Mumia-Jamal on the Abu Ghraib torture scandal and how it ties in with what is happening in American prisons). Likewise there's a number of really interesting comics about New York, from Coney Island's gentrification by Rebecca Migdal to Fly's history of the New York Time's Up and Critical Mass bike rides. Seth Tobocman also gives a round up of what's been going on in New Orleans since Hurricane Katrina, with the Housing Authority of New Orleans not allowing the previous tenants back after the flood (despite there being no structural damage to their houses). The quality is high throughout despite the variety of themes and visual styles. (edd)

www.worldwar3illustrated.org



X-Rated Animal Hospital Presents: Nurse Pussy & Doctor Dog's Activity Book

A6/ b&w/ printed/ 16 pages/ £1

This is a naughty little activity book with more than a tongue planted firmly in its cheek, if you know what I'm insinuating? If you're currently awaiting a stay in hospital - armed with only your Anti-MRSA pyjamas perhaps? - or fancy bringing a sick mate the joy of lewd innuendo over yet another basket of Lucazade and grapes, then this is definitely what Doctor Dog ordered. Then again, if you're fit as a fiddle, and feel you simply haven't lived until you've been afforded the opportunity to wordsearch 'Vagus,' 'Discharge' and 'Feculent,' or the chance to 'pencil-lead' a dot-to-dot nude centrefold, I'd thoroughly recommend this to any sicko in general. The artwork itself is unique and playfully cute, lending itself perfectly to the somewhat perverse content at hand. Who knows, should a bumper-sized compendium ever make its way into publication, it might just give those meddlesome 'Quiz Kids' a run for their money. (Chris Lipgloss)

www.nursepussy.co.uk

Zine Directory #0.1

A5/ b&w/ copied/ 44 pages/ £1

A very impressive, and very comprehensive, zine directory of UK zines and distros (with one or two international zines thrown in for good measure). Each zine has a review of what it's about, who it would appeal to, how many copies have been produced and then issues such as whether it takes adverts, how often it comes out, prices, who the editors are etc. etc. It's a really impressive piece of work, and an invaluable document of the UK zine community. Nice one! (edd)

appleby.jane@gmail.com

Zine fiends!

Send us your zines to review:

Po Box 382, 456-458 The Strand, London, WC2R 0DZ.



Toby Chelms

The New Wave of Cut and Paste

Interview by: Edd - edd@rnzine.co.uk Illustration: Toby Chelms

Toby does a variety of zines from *The New Wave of Cut and Paste* - a zine full of clipart madness - to *In My Head* (about mental health) and the recent *UK Zine Yearbook*.

LH: What's your first memory?

I'd like to say something like seeing Kiss at Donnington or seeing the Poll Tax riots but it's actually falling down the stairs when I was two years old which resulted in me cracking my head open (still got the scar, I'm gonna look so cool when I go bald!).

LH: Why do you write fanzines?

Short answer - because mainstream media is so full of shit due to the overbearing presence of litigation and need for money linked with sales.

Long answer: There's different reasons behind each zine I do. The first zine I did (*Tappin' Foot*) started because me and Oli always talked about what we'd ask our favourite bands if we had the chance so we decided to email some and find out. Oddly enough that zine lasted two issues (over two years!). For my next zine *In My Head* I was getting quite frustrated in my work within an NHS Mental Health team in that the key reason behind most mental health issues was caused by stigma and lack of understanding; yet most information giving occurred only in NHS settings and it's not like your 'average' person on the street was going to go and pick up a book on mental health so I decided to write a zine explaining mental health issues but using well known musician and artists's experiences to draw people in. Sadly out of all the zines I've done this one sold the worst but is probably the one I'm most proud of. I hope to do a second issue of this soon so get in touch if interested in contribut-

ing! For *The New Wave of Cut & Paste* I kept hearing funny conversations on my journey to work so decided to share them with my friends, they made a few people laugh and I'd been messing about with clip art so merged the two, interviewed some people I thought had something interesting to say and it went from there! For the *UK Zine Yearbook* I'd read a lot of people online saying there was no real UK zine scene or decent new zines, I knew this was bollocks so decided to make a sampler of the UK scene - simple!

LH: What are your top five zines?

Tough one but I will go for in no particular order: Gadgie, Artcore, Let's Just Pretend, Rum Lad, Hey Surburbia

LH: Photocopying or getting printed?

I've always got mine photocopied and there is a lovely feeling of satisfaction attached to that, but recently I've had access to a printer which is actually cheaper than photocopying even for low (100ish) copies of my zines so I do get mine printed but photocopy bits from time to time and still do for gig posters and flyers.

LH: Illustrations or photos?

Clip Art! Apart from that both if done well. If it's of a local event/gig it can be a much better archive of a moment to have a photo but due to bad printing they usually come out really dark and inky whereas illustrations usually come out nicer (see Rum Lad) but if printed well (see Last Hours/Maximum R'N'R) photos can be awesome too.

LH: What's your greatest fear?

I am a total wimp so that changes day to day (I saw Cloverfield on the weekend so at the moment it's invasion of Brighton by a sea monster) but I guess maybe going

deaf as I'm already deaf in one ear and I go to a lot of gigs so I do need to be careful about that.

LH: What do you enjoy doing most?

Spending time with good people. Whether that's doing a tour with my band and meeting people in places I've never been before, chatting to other zine geeks, cooking with my girlfriend (as in cooking together rather than using her as an ingredient) or just catching up with old friends. I know the phrase 'you live alone and you die alone' is true but you may as well spend the time in between in good company.

LH: If you could go back anywhere in time where would you go and why?

The Trojan War! I'm a classics geek and am so interested in how history is changed over the years depending on who's in charge and I think the ancient Greek and Roman myths have been totally adapted to make different Emperors and Governors look better, so I'd love to actually meet the people at the formation of these stories and have a chat with them about how it really went down. That and Brighton in 1986 so I could see Government Issue at the Pressure Point.

LH: How would you like to be remembered?

As the man who replaced Gary Tallent as the bassist in the E-Street band. I'm very optimistic about my future.

LH: Tell us a joke.

Okay, people who know me know I only have really bad rude jokes so in case my Mum reads this:

Q. Why do anarchists only drink green tea?
A. Because proper tea is theft. ☹

tobychelms@hotmail.com



STENCIL TEMPLATE

Guide to use: Cut out image. Find photocopy machine. Enlarge image by 400%. Mount to cardboard (cardboard folders work well). Cut out area coloured black! Find a blank surface - or make one. Place against surface. Spray!

Artwork by: Josh MacPhee - *Titled:* ¡YA BASTA!



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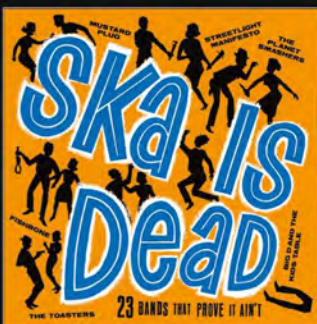
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